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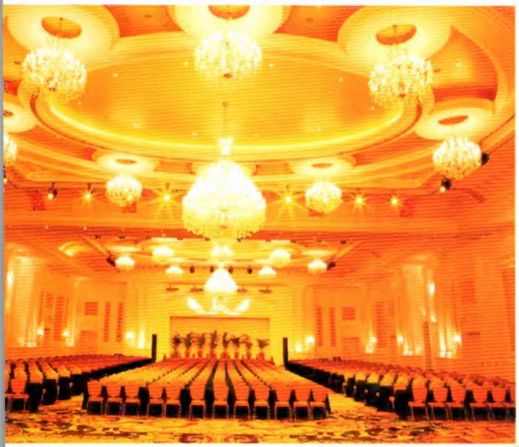

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Mar / Apr 2006 302

Contents

32

8 From the Editor

Ever-Charming Zhejiang

10 Update

12 Travel Notes

14 Calendar

16 Feature Story

The Landscapes of Zhejiang in Picturesque Jiangnan

Photos & Article • Xie Guanghui

20 **Transport and Tourist Map of Zhejiang**

22 **The West Lake Through the Ages**

Photos • Xie Guanghui Article • Tao Ran

28 **Xixi: A Pained Scroll From Heaven**

Photos • Xie Guanghui Article • Chen Yun

Thanks to the foresight of Northern Song Dynasty (960—1127) leader Emperor Gaozong who moved the capital from Kaifeng to Hangzhou during his reign, the natural surroundings of nearby Xixi (West Stream) have remained unblemished to this day.

32 **Hangzhou: Where Relaxation Reigns**

Photos • Xie Guanghui Article • Wang Zhen

42 **Northern Zhejiang — A World of Water Towns**

44 **Authentic Xitang** Photos • Zhou Xiangyang, Xie Guanghui Article • Jin Mei

Imagine a visit to Xitang. On a rainy day, in spring, summer, autumn or winter, you stop for a few days' escape from the rush of daily life.

48 **Wuzhen Memories** Photos • Xie Guanghui Article • Jin Mei

54 **Nanxun: A Town of Moguls** Photos & Article • Xie Guanghui

62 **Eastern Zhejiang —**
Famous Figures and the Realm of Buddhism

64 **Shaoxing: City of Renown**

Photos • Huang Yanhong, Xie Guanghui Article • Huang Yanhong

No other place in Zhejiang can compete with the cultural density of Shaoxing, where every street, every bridge and every mansion has its own special story.

28

48

64

INTERCONTINENTAL PUDONG SHANGHAI

Your Meeting Place in the Heart of Pudong

Ideally situated in the heart of the Lujiazui financial district and just minutes' walk to nearby subway stations and shopping malls, the InterContinental Pudong Shanghai guarantees you consistent 5-star standards, attention to detail and personalized service, as well as the most wonderful accommodation.

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Catering to Tasteful Diners

InterContinental Pudong Shanghai enjoys a great local reputation with their restaurants and bars. Level One offers Cafe-Sushi-Noodles, a great mix of Eastern and Western delicacies around the clock, with either buffet or a la carte for your choice, to enjoy an assortment of sushi and sashimi dishes in a bright relaxing environment, try Sushiman; Oriental House has all the best food from Canton, Shanghai, Chaozhou and Sichuan; while Red Chopsticks offers great international noodles supplemented by a large selection of herbal, healthy and flavoursome Chinese teas — at surprisingly low prices.

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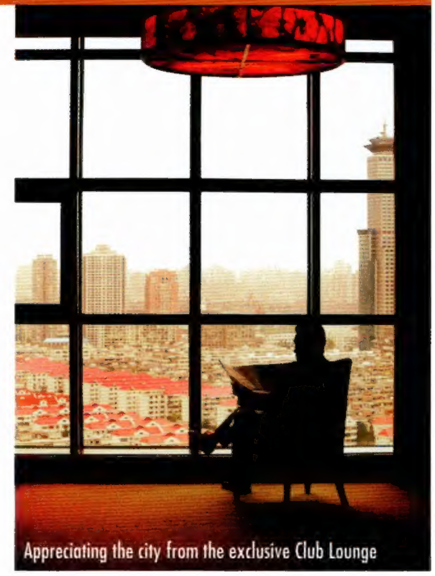
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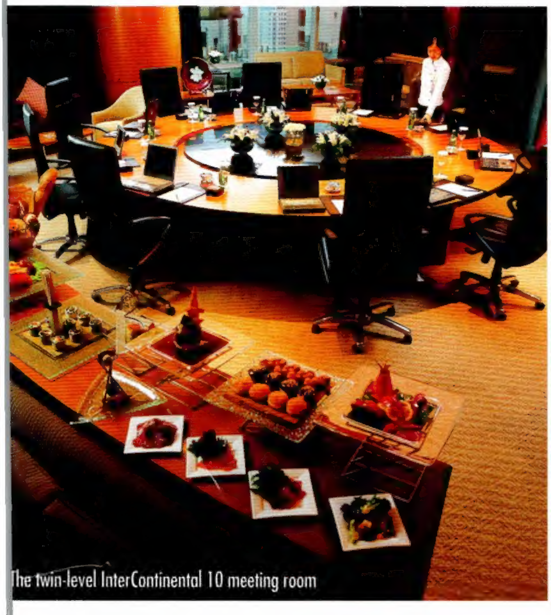

The twin-level InterContinental 10 meeting room

Hospitable and helpful hotel staff

Spacious guestroom

The hotel Atrium

Mar / Apr 2006

302 Contents

72 **Ningbo: A Cultural Port** Photos • Song Xingguo, Xie Guanghui Article • Gu Huade

The term "bund" instantly brings Shanghai to mind, but the bund in Ningbo, Zhejiang Province, is 20 years older. Many tycoons who have played important roles in the economies of both Shanghai and Hong Kong were from Ningbo.

80 **A Date with Mt Putuo** Photos • Xie Guanghui Article • She Ting

88 **Southern Zhejiang — Awesome Mountains and Waters**

90 **Lishui: Source of Six Rivers** Photos & Article • Shi Baoxiu

96 **Wenzhou: Commercial City Cradles in Culture**

Photos & Article • Shi Baoxiu

104 **Taizhou: Where Fairies Dwell** Photos & Article • Shi Baoxiu

Inaccessible due to its mountainous terrain, ancient Taizhou took pride in its title, "Famous Mountain by the Sea". The protective stone barrier encircling rugged Mt Taizhou is now called the "Great Wall of Jiangnan".

114 **Western Zhejiang — Historical Interest & Natural Wonders**

116 **Jinhua: Birthplace of Wong Tai Sin** Photos & Article • Huang Yanhong

122 **Fantastic Quzhou** Photos & Article • Huang Yanhong

Though often overused, the word "fantastic" describes Quzhou perfectly. The 1,800-year-old town south of the Yangtze River is rich in tourist attractions, including Qianjiangyuan National Forest Park, Mount Jianglangshan and a stone forest formed 500 million years ago.

130 A Nation's Tale

Post Office on Horseback

Photos & Article • Zhao Jing

132 Discoveries

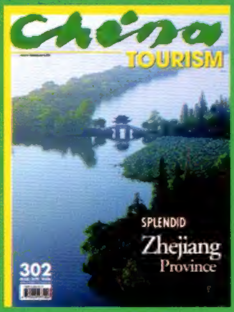
The Fate of 18 Tang Mausoleums in Shaanxi

Photos & Article • Hu Wugong

Today 18 mausoleums remain for the Tangy Dynasty emperors can still be found in Shaanxi Province. They stand silent witness to the rise and subsequent fall of the Tang Dynasty, one of the most prosperous eras of ancient China.

142 Back Issues

144 Next Issue



Cover: The Su Dyke and West Lake, Hangzhou (by Xie Guanghui)

CITY HOTEL SHANGHAI

Feel Like Home in the City of City

A joint venture with the Hong Kong Shui On Group, City Hotel Shanghai was granted the certificate of "in appreciation of your enterprise's excellent economic and export performance" in eight years. It was one of the earliest deluxe hotels concerning foreign affairs in the tourism industry of Shanghai. In 2003, the hotel has been raised to a four-star hotel.

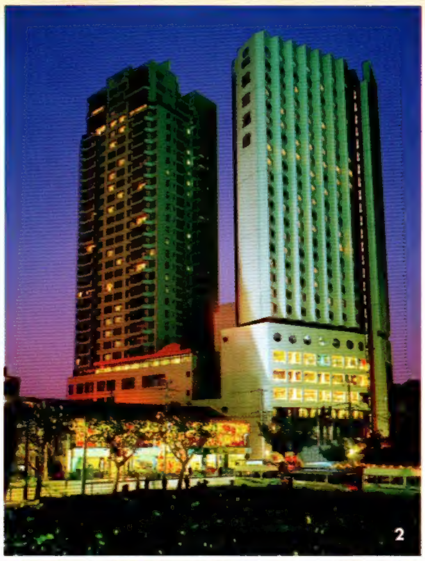
Located in the heart of downtown Shanghai, City Hotel Shanghai is just minutes to the Shanghai Exhibition Centre, World Expo' venue, Nanjing Pedestrian Shopping Road, and other popular tourist spots.

Besides the 274 guestrooms well-equipped with all kinds of communication services including DDD, IDD, satellite TVs, and broadband Internet, there is a full range of modern facilities to the downtown hotel, such as comprehensive conference facilities, F&B outlets with excellent cuisine, new indoor swimming pool, fragrant health care court, sauna, gymnasium, beauty salon, and KTV, etc.

Talking "the best business hotel in the heart of downtown Shanghai" as the aim, City Hotel Shanghai places a great deal of emphasis on excellence in service. Combined with a reputation for efficiency, friendship and a priority in guest service, the hotel has been able to satisfy all of their guests' requirements. Being a guest here, you will feel like being at home — safe and warm.

Special Offers

City Seafood Buffet Dinner: From now until end of March, one can taste a large variety of fresh seafood — baby-lobster, oysters, golden crabs, clams, salmon and tuna — in Vienna Restaurant. Present your Gold Member's Card of the City Club, you can even enjoy more privileges. For more information, please visit the website: www.cityhotelshanghai.com



1. The newly refurbished executive floor
2. City Hotel Shanghai is located in the heart of the city
3. The grand indoor swimming pool
4. The Shanghai Restaurant serves authentic Shanghai cuisine

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FROM THE EDITOR

Ever-Charming Zhejiang

Have you every visited East China's Zhejiang Province? If so, what were your impressions of the area and its people?

In this issue of China Tourism, we are pleased to introduce you — or reintroduce you as the case may be — to Zhejiang, the province we believe best caters to travellers. In addition to the magnificent natural and social landscapes presented in our stories, we also hope the detailed travel tips will be of both interest and practical use.

Our reporters toured Zhejiang on five separate routes: via Hangzhou city and from the north, south, east and west. Each route offers different wonders and traditions, but all share a rich historical and cultural ambience.

If you haven't been to Zhejiang, we hope this issue will ignite your desire to go; if you have been, may you discover something new about a dear familiar friend.

Nanxijiang River, Wenzhou (by Shi Baoxiu)

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Having notched up the goal of transforming into a truly 4-star business hotel, South Pacific Hotel invites you to experience the all-round comforts we deliver:

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Seven Wonders of the World to be Reselected

The Seven Wonders of the World will be reselected. China's Great Wall is a hotspot among the 21 candidates. Online voting started around the globe on Jan 1, 2006 and will last one year. The result will be unveiled on 2007 New Year's Day.

Other nominees include the Stonehenge of the UK, Petra of Jordan, Eiffel Tower of Paris, Sydney Opera House, Coliseum of Rome, Taj Mahal Mausoleum of India, Athens Acropolis, Angkor Wat of Cambodia and the Statue of Liberty of the US. Among the original Seven Wonders of the World, the Great Pyramid of Giza in Egypt is the only surviving one. It is also included in the nominee list this time.

Website: www.n7w.com

New Metro to Connect Beijing Airport & Downtown

Construction on the 27.3-km-long metro line, connecting the Beijing Capital International Airport and Dongzhimen in downtown Beijing with four stations, is scheduled to be completed in June 2008, in time for the Olympics.

Trains will be able to complete the journey in 16 minutes, while now it takes a taxi at least half an hour to cover the same section on an expressway without a traffic jam. Approved by the National Commission of Reform and Development, the project will be the first train scheme in Beijing to be built without government money. The estimated price for a single trip is 20 yuan.

The HKITE and ITE MICE 2006

ITE2006, the 20th International Travel Expo Hong Kong, will be held from June 15 to 18 at the Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre. The ITE MICE, a newly launched exhibition for business travels and MICE market will also be held concurrently with ITE Hong Kong. It targets to attract 2,000 corporate buyers and thousands of travel agents from the region. Helped by a booming market, the success of the ITE 2005, and a wide appreciation of the synergy between ITE MICE and ITE, both exhibitions are receiving excellent responses from the international travel industry.

Website: www.itehk.com for ITE / www.itehkmice.com for ITE MICE

Cathay Pacific Opens New Routes

Cathay Pacific Airways will open flights to Moscow and Manchester starting from March 27, 2006. Cathay Pacific claimed itself the first Hong Kong airline to fly Moscow. Aircraft of the company will fly three times a week to Moscow, sharing code with Aeroflot. The same aircraft will then continue onward to Manchester, making Cathay Pacific the only airline providing direct passenger service from Hong Kong to the British city. The route will be operated with an Airbus A340-300.

Beijing Launches "Year of Italy in China"

The cultural event hosted in Beijing will feature a wide range of activities including film festivals, dance performances, exhibitions, forums on environmental protection, and education and research, and joint science and technology programs - all designed to open a window for the Chinese people into the lives and thoughts of Italian people, thereby promoting bilateral ties and mutual understanding. The cultural event will be celebrated in many Chinese cities including Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Tianjin, Hong Kong, Shenyang, Harbin, Ningbo, and Suzhou.

More Passenger Railways to Be Built

During the 11th Five-Year Plan period (2006—2010), China will complete construction of 9,800 km of railway lines for passenger transport, among which 5,457 km will run 300 km per hour. Projects of passenger railways number 28, with the investment totalling RMB1.25 trillion (US$154 billion). 13 passenger railway projects will begin construction and 11 will continue construction in 2006.

After about five years of efforts, the country will have established a network for passenger transport which consists of 32,000 km of special passenger lines, inter-city passenger lines and speeded up lines. The network will be able to radiate 70% of cities with no less than 500,000 residents and meet the requirement of rapid and convenient travel for more than 700 million people.

Luoyang to Build Botanical Garden on Ruins

Approved by the State Administration of Cultural Heritage, the project of a botanical garden on Luoyang's Sui (581—618) and Tang (618—907) dynasties ruins will be the first time in the world to build a botanical garden on ruins. Expected to covering an area of 2,835 *mu* (473 acres), the botanical garden will be home to more than 1,500 species of plants, with 1.3 million square metres of green land and 180,000 square metres of waters. This garden will simulate a natural wetland to attract wetland fowls.

Zhangjiajie, Hunan

China to Hold Miss Travel Contest from 2006 to 2010

The China's Organizing Committee for the Miss Travel Contest has confirmed that China was authorized to hold the Miss Travel contest annually from 2006 to 2010. This is the first time the contest to be held out of Malaysia, its birthplace. The committee expresses hope that the contest can create more opportunity of exchanges and cooperation on tourism for the countries participating. Contestants from 40 countries and regions are expected to join in the 2006 Miss Travel contest held in Zhangjiajie, a famous scenic resort in Central China's Hunan Province.

Yunnan to Build Tea Cultural Garden

The grand garden will be located in Yunnan Nationalities Village and cover an area of 50 *mu* (8.25 acres) with a construction area of 20,000 square metres. The tea cultural garden will consist of different types of leisure facilities including Yunnan tea culture research association, tea museum, ethnic tea ceremony house, Puer tea culture training center and Puer tea auction centre.

From ancient to modern times, ethnic groups in Yunnan follow their own ways to plant, produce and appreciate tea. They observe and experience from different angles the status and signification of tea culture in social practice, inject a variety of new connotation into tea culture, and form Yunnan's colourful ethnic tea culture.

The Central Hotel Shanghai to Build Tower 2

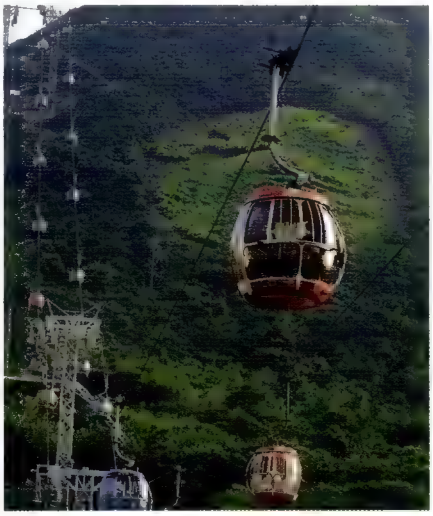
The construction of Central Hotel Shanghai Tower 2 is scheduled to be completed in 2008. The building will be conveniently located in downtown Shanghai's shopping and business district. It enjoys easy access to both Hongqiao and Pudong international airports and is also close to the subway. The new tower possesses 368 spacious and exquisitely appointed rooms equipped with contemporary facilities.

Air Canada to Introduce New Flights

With effective on June 16, 2006, Air Canada will introduce non-stop service between Toronto and Shanghai. Since then, three non-stop flights will be operated per week between Toronto and China's largest city, complementing its Toronto-Beijing non-stop service launched in June 2005, and its daily non-stop flights to both Shanghai and Beijing from Vancouver.

Ocean Park "Loving Hong Kong Surprise" 2006

"Hong Kong People's Theme Park", Ocean Park would like to celebrate its birthday with everyone in Hong Kong. From now until Jan 10, 2007, visitors can enjoy free day time admission to celebrate their birthday by simply presenting their HK identity cards or HK Birth Certificates.



Yunnan

Three Pagodas Rebuilt in Dali

An emblem of ancient Yunnan history and culture, the Three Pagodas of Chongsheng Temple located in suburban Dali city, Yunnan Province, have recently been rebuilt. Erected by the 10th emperor, Quanfeng Youshi, of the Nanshao state during 824-859, the temple had helped spread Buddhism widely during the reign of Quanfeng Youshi, therefore bringing Yunnan the fame of a "Buddhist realm". Reconstruction of the Chongsheng Temple started in 2004, with an investment of nearly RMB200 million, and was completed in early 2006.

Culture

Traditional Festivals Registered as Domain Names

According to recent record, over 40 traditional Chinese festivals have been registered as domain names, including the Lantern Festival and the Double Ninth Festival. The names of minority nationality festivals have also been used, such as the Water-Sprinkling Festival of the Dai ethnic group. The enthusiasm about registration of Chinese domain names shows the Chinese are beginning to realize the importance of the protection of traditional Chinese culture.

Guizhou

Huangguoshu Waterfall Airport Opens

The airport near Huangguoshu, the biggest waterfall in Asia, has opened to air traffic on Jan 16, 2006. Located in Guizhou Province, the airport is expected to bring more visitors to the waterfall and other nearby scenic spots. The airline to and from Guangzhou, capital of Guangdong Province, presently offers three flights every week.

VICTIMS
300000

Massacre Memorial Hall

Zhejiang

"Conscience of Japan" Remembered by Nanjing

Shiro Azuma, a Japanese war veteran, who was praised as "Conscience of Japan" since he published his wartime diary in 1987 to make public the atrocities committed by Japanese soldiers during the Nanjing Massacre in 1937, has died of cancer in Kyoto in December 2005. Azuma visited China seven times since 1987 to apologize and help Chinese scholars find evidence of the Japanese soldiers' brutality. He was preparing for his eighth trip to Nanjing before he fell ill last November. Relics kept by him proving the Nanjing Massacre have also been dedicated to the Memorial Hall of the Nanjing Massacre.

Guangdong

Yangjiang Starts to Build Marine Silk Road Museum

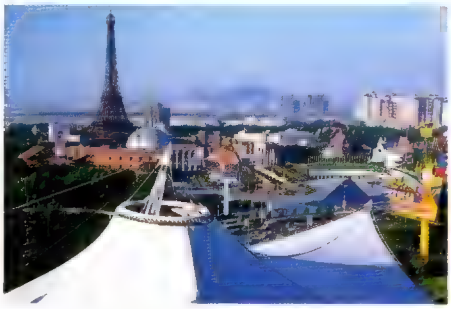
Covering more than 130 sq km with an investment of RMB160 million, the museum will complete its construction at the end of next year and will open to the public in 2007. The museum is built for displaying the ancient vessel, the Nanhai No. 1 Ship, and the goods found on it, which will be unearthed from the South China Sea next year. The 25-metre-long Nanhai No. 1 sank 20 nautical miles off the hailing island in Song Dynasty, about 800 years ago. In December 2005, cultural experts have tried to apply the Marin Silk Road of China, which passed nine eastern coastal cities in China, to become a World Cultural Heritage. Among the nine places, Guangzhou, Quanzhou and Ningbo were the three major cities of the Marine Silk Road.

Shennongjia

Hubei

Shennongjia Reopens in March

After it has been closed since January this year for "ecological recovery", 13 years after its opening to the public, the Shennongjia Nature Reserve will reopen on March 25. Shennongjia was accepted by the UNESCO as one of the world's biosphere preservation zones in 1990. The nature reserve was named after Shen Nong, a legendary figure who tasted hundreds of kinds of medicinal herbs to look for medicine.



Shenzhen

New Tourist Centre to Promote Shenzhen

A new tourist centre is built in Shenzhen aiming to help travellers undertake one-day-tours of the city, or tours of its neighbouring regions. Services provided by the centre include hotel reservations, transportation and ticketing, etc.

The centre aims to develop business in Shenzhen's neighbouring cities to lure tourists to Shenzhen, and also promote a package tour centred around Shenzhen with Hong Kong and Macau as options. Under the supervision of the Shenzhen Municipal Tourism Bureau, it is seen as an effective tool to push illegal travel agencies and tour guides out of the market.

Beijing

Ancient Book Library Opens in Beijing

Formerly the National Library of Peiping, the Ancient Book Library, a branch of National Library of China (NLC), is closely located to North Sea Park, Imperial Palace, and Zhongnanhai. With its main building completed in 1931, the library has now become a cultural relic under key protection in Beijing.

The library preserves more than 2.6 million volumes of ancient books, the largest ancient book collection, the most varieties and the richest content in China. 300,000 bibliography items of ordinary ancient books have been published on the Internet, and at the same time copies of some literature and a batch of large-scale photocopied ancient books are also available. Digitisation has also become one of NLC's aims recently, so as to allow more ancient books to be read via Internet.

Hainan

China's First Volcano Geopark Opens

Located south of Leiqiong Rift Valley of the Qiongzhou Strait, the volcano-themed park, approved by the Ministry of Land and Resources, boasts the sites of more than 40 volcanoes, 30 volcanic caves, and rich collection of rare tropic plants. Vegetation, soil, lava, mineral water and hot spring are the five treasures in the volcanic area. The nearest volcano is just 15 km away from the downtown area of Haikou, the provincial capital. Volcanoes in Hainan are the best preserved volcano heritage in the country. A few of the dormant volcanoes erupted since the Holocene epoch about 10,000 years ago.

Shanxi

Mount Wutai Prepares World Heritage Listing

Located in North China's Shanxi Province, Mt Wutai is home to 47 Buddhist temples and more than 3,000 Buddhist monks and nuns. It was designated as one of China's four short-listed candidates for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) World Cultural Heritage contest in 2006. The other three candidates are Karst scenery of south China, Mt Cangshan of Yunnan Province and Mt Sanqing of Jiangxi Province.

Shanghai

Industrial Tourism Promoted in Shanghai

Industry and agriculture tours will be the highlight of the city's tourism in 2006. Among the eight top sights for its industry and agriculture tours developed, four of these sights are expected to be models of China's future industry and agriculture tourism.

Various sights related to the two themes will soon be widely publicized. Industry tours will lead visitors to famous corporations including Baosteel Group and Shanghai Volkswagen Co Ltd. New features such as "The Bridge 8" brings visitors to a lifestyle creation centre. Located downtown, it consists of several different offices, meeting rooms, information bureaus and educational institutions.

Aviation

Qantas Reopens Sydney-Beijing Route

The Qantas Airways has officially launched direct route between Sydney and Beijing on January 2006. Recently the airways provides three direct flights respectively on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays between two cities, as well as four direct flights between Sydney and Shanghai. It also expects to open everyday direct flights between Sydney and Beijing or Shanghai within two years.

The Airbus A330-300 newly introduced by Qantas Airways in China's routes provides the Skybed - one of the world's longest and most comfortable international business classes; besides, Mandarin channels of AV system can also be enjoyed in both business and economic classes.

Transport

First Expressway Linking China and ASEAN

An important part of China's national highway network, the first expressway between China and ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) has recently opened.

With an investment of 3.7 billion yuan (US$456 million), the 179.2-km-long eight-lane expressway starts from Nanning, capital of Southwest China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region and leads to Vietnam's Friendship Pass. It now takes less than two hours travelling between Nanning and the Sino-Vietnamese border, as well as five hours from Nanning to Hanoi.

2006
MAR/APR

Now ~ end of March **Sichuan**

Aba & Jiuzhaigou Icefalls Travel Festival

It is still a world of snow in West China, for instance, in Sichuan. Inspiring different feeling from the Harbin Ice Festival, the Aba & Jiuzhaigou icefalls captivate tourist with their natural beauty. Also, they become best target for photo buffs.

April 19 ~ 24 **Shandong**

The 23rd Weifang Kite Festival

Following the grand opening on Apr 20, both contestants and audience can enjoy the most famous activity in the "world's kite capital". The following days will be filled with domestic and international contests, demonstrations, spectacular ground displays, and some of the most amazing kites you will ever see. During your stay visit it is recommended to visit the World Kite Museum.

Website: www.weifangkitefest.com/index.php

April 3~14 **Guizhou**

Sister Meal Festival of the Miaos

Usually taken in spring, the festival is a celebration of love for Guizhou people. In Shidong or Taijiang County in southeastern Guizhou, girls by that time will flock to the mountains to collect wild flowers and berries to dye the glutinous rice known as Sister's Rice and cook. When the rice is cooked, they roll it into balls. Each girl, dressed in their best, prepares her rice with a symbol then wraps it in a handkerchief or put inside small baskets.

April **Yunnan**

Water Splashing Festival

If you desire to experience authentic minority customs in West China, don't miss the annual Water-Splashing Festival (or Festival for Bathing the Buddha) of the Dai people in Xishuangbanna. Held during the sixth month of the Dai calendar (usually in mid-April), it is the most important event of the Dais. It is also a festival to commemorate the Dai New Year, giving best wishes to friends and family. Activities include bathing the Buddha, sprinkling water onto each other for good fortune, dragon-boat racing, launching rockets and lighting lanterns, fairs, etc.

March ~ April **Jiangsu**

Suzhou Int’l Travel Festivities

An array of celebrations related to floral-appreciation will promise tourists with most romantic memories in Suzhou. Starting from March, tourists can appreciate fllower exhibition around Huqiu Tower, azalea at Humble Administrator's Garden, tulips at Suzhou Wonderland, and peony in Changshu, Kunshanting Garden, etc. Besides, different areas of the city, including Zhouzhuang, Tongli, Mudu, will host various events to celebrate the beginning of their peak travel season.

April 4~19 **Hong Kong**

30th Hong Kong International Film Festival

From international award-winning movies to avant-garde indies, this 16-day extravaganza in April screens nearly 300 films from around the world. It is a premier cultural event that never fails to entertain. Popular categories include Hong Kong Panorama and a retrospective from the Hong Kong Film Archive. Reserve your seat earlier. For more detail, please visit the website: www.hkiff.org.hk/

April 15 ~ 25 **Henan**

Luoyang Peony Fair

During the fair, the city blooms with the beautiful flowers, which give out a faint scent, while entertaining shows are performed. Visitors may view flowers, visit exhibitions of lanterns, paintings, calligraghy and photographs, and take part in symposiums and business talks. Tourists may visit the renowned Longmen Grottoes, the White Horse Temple and ancient tombs.

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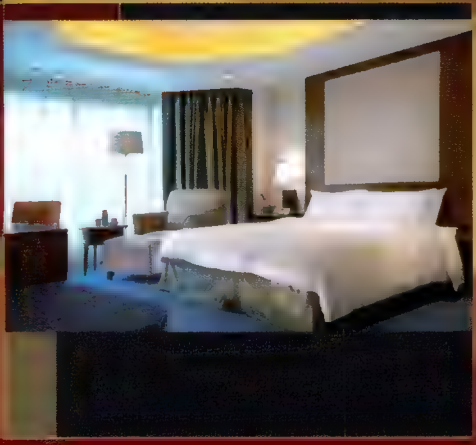
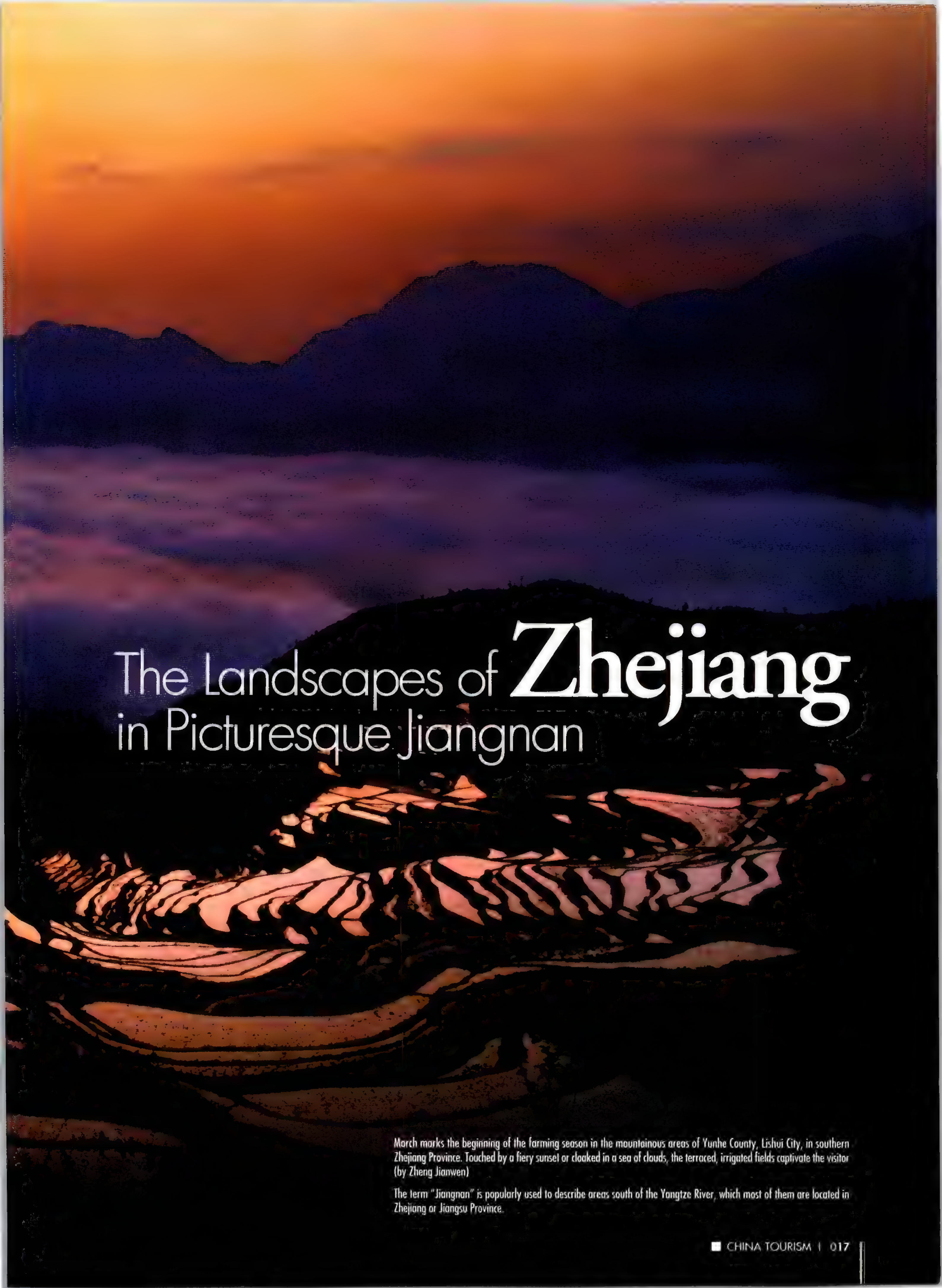


The Landscapes of Zhejiang in Picturesque Jiangnan



March marks the beginning of the farming season in the mountainous areas of Yunhe County, Lishui City, in southern Zhejiang Province. Touched by a fiery sunset or cloaked in a sea of clouds, the terraced, irrigated fields captivate the visitor (by Zheng Jianwen)

The term "Jiangnan" is popularly used to describe areas south of the Yangtze River, which most of them are located in Zhejiang or Jiangsu Province.

Photo & Article : [illegible]

As a Chinese I always strive to avoid misusing traditional four-character idioms to praise the beauty of a place. However, after visiting Zhejiang Province in East China, I can only describe it as "Di Ling Ren Jie" and "Wu Hua Tian Bao", meaning "a fair land that breeds many outstanding figures" and "products from the area seem to have been made in Heaven", respectively. These two phrases seem to have been created just for Zhejiang.

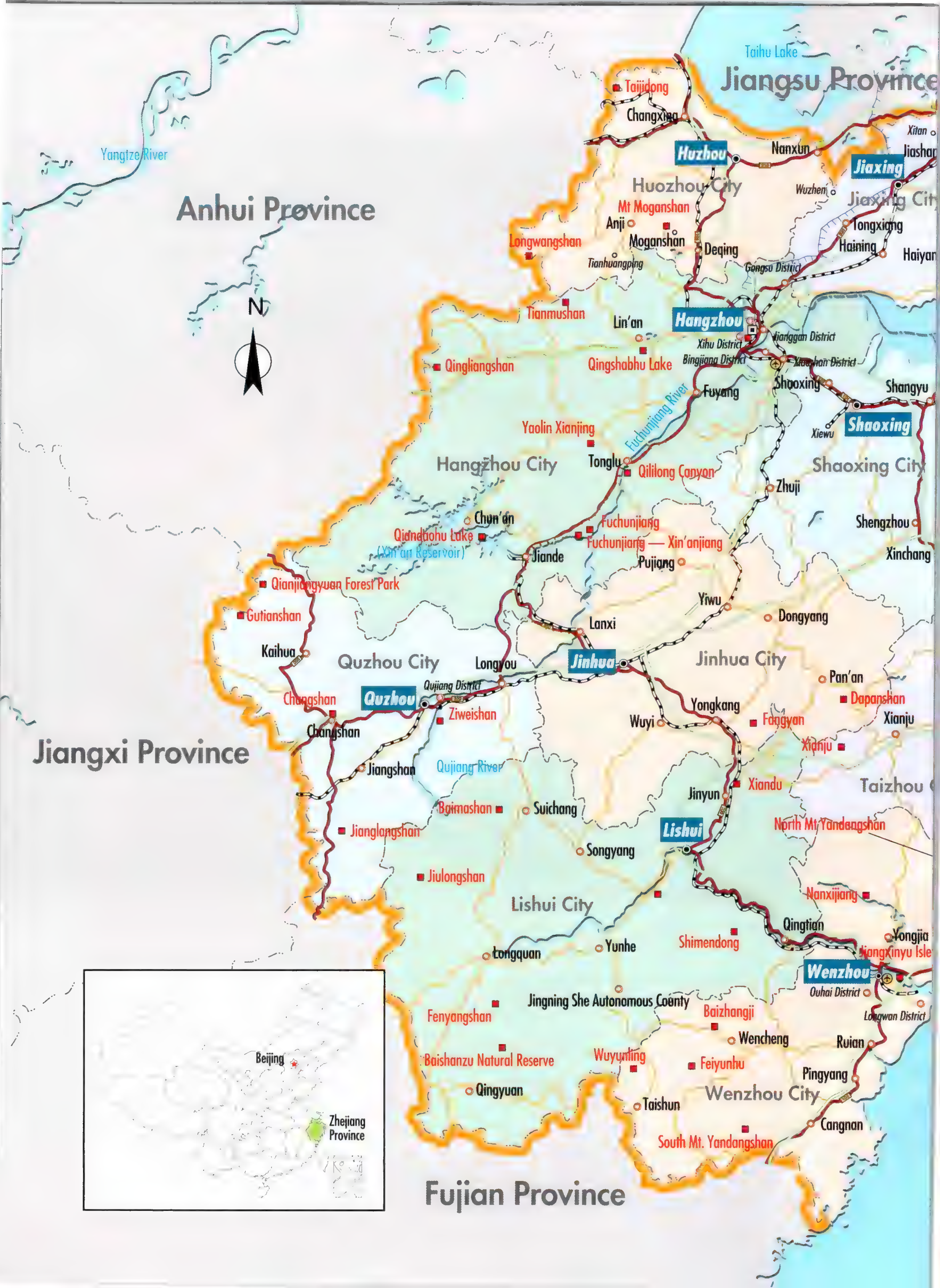
Take the province's mountains, for instance. Though few of them are listed among China's major mountain ranges, many were formed from lava from volcanic eruptions under the sea very long ago. Today, the mountains, their wealth of natural resources still intact, retain an ethereal beauty.

Then there are her rivers. Though not on the scale of the national waterways, all cover a wide area while still surrounded by graceful scenery. Separated by mountains, they split into the four gentle rivers of Qiantangjiang, Wajiang, Lingjiang and Yongjiang, and eventually flow into the East China Sea.

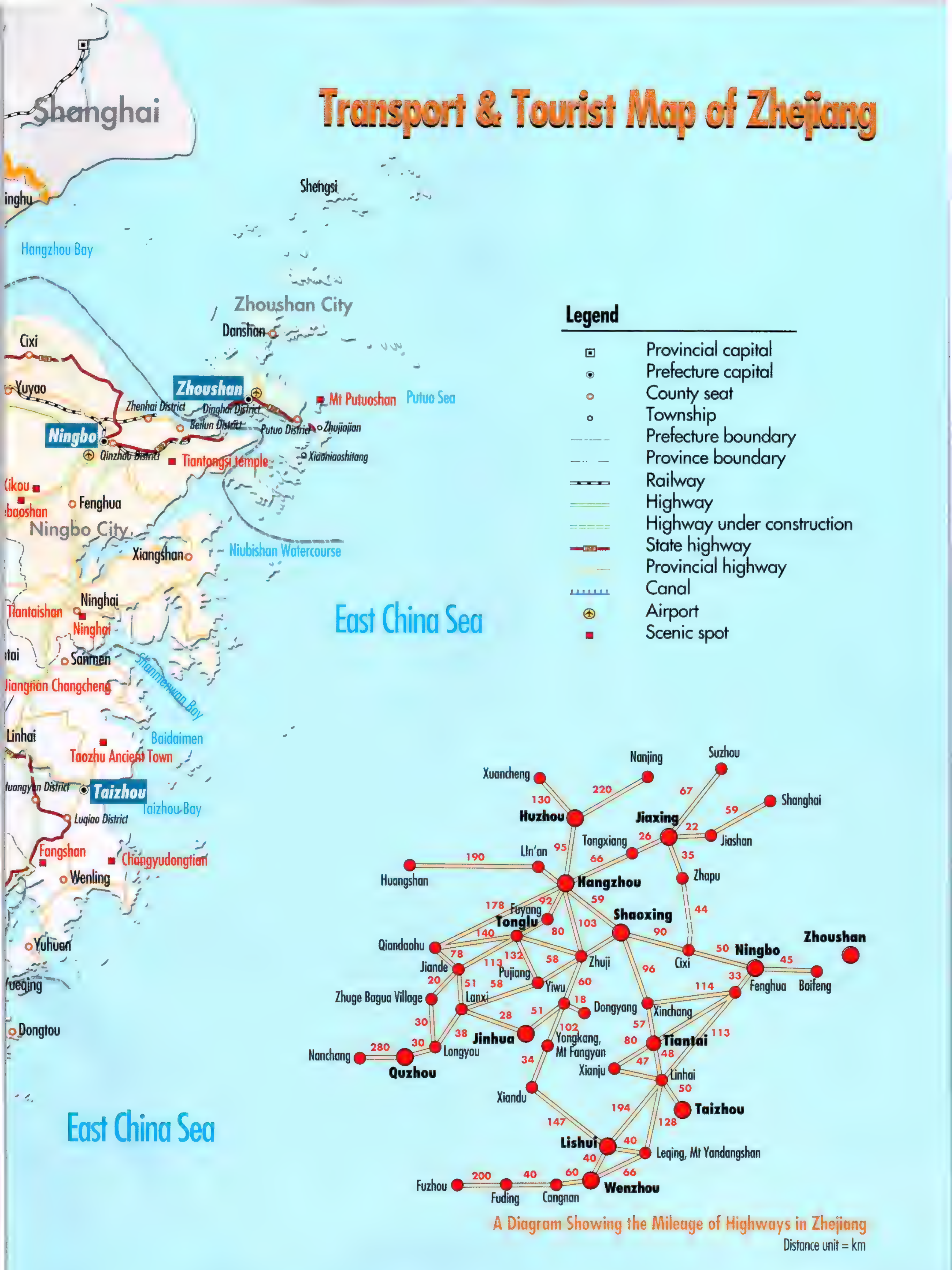
The slopes of Yan Dan Shan Mountain, located in Wenzhou in southern Zhejiang, owe their striking beauty to rhyolite, a top of fine-grain crystalline volcanic rock. Legend refers to a shallow mountain-top lake that drew wild geese in the autumn. Jiu Feng Jian (Nine Sharp Peaks), the main peak, looms 1,237 metres above sea level. Here Shamao Peak in the mountain's Lingyan Scenic Area is pictured. "Shamao" in Chinese means the black gauze hat worn by officials in feudal society

Finally, her islands meander for some six kilometres along the coastline of Zhejiang. The more than 3,000 islands, with a total land area in excess of 500 sq km, boast breathtaking scenery and an abundance of seafood.

The mountains and waters of Zhejiang form the province's extraordinary history and guide its modern development. While the earliest Neolithic cultures were cultivated here more than 7,000 years ago, the legendary Yue State of the Spring & Autumn Period (770—476 B.C.) also experienced its downfall and revival in Zhejiang. Lin'an, capital city of the prosperous Southern Song Dynasty (1127—1279), was erected here. The province produced many great Chinese emperors and leaders throughout history, as well as champion public academic examination candidates, literary giants, influential thinkers, and celebrated calligraphy masters. Accomplished sword makers and ceramicists, stone and wood carvers, and gifted brewers plied their trades here, while much of the nation's pioneering work in the silk, boat, paper and printing industries also occurred in Zhejiang.


Taihu Lake
Jiangsu Province
Taijidong
Changxing
Yangtze River
Huzhou
Nanxun
Jiaxing
Xitan
Jiashan
Anhui Province
Huozhou City
Mt Moganshan
Wuzhen
Jiaxing City
Anji
Longwangshan
Moganshan
Tongxiang
Deqing
Haining
Haiyan
Tianhuangping
Gongsu District
N
Tianmushan
Lin'an
Hangzhou
Jianggan District
Xihu District
Qingliangshan
Qingshabhu Lake
Bingjiang District
Xiaoshan District
Shaoxing
Shangyu
Fuyang
Fuchunjiang River
Shaoxing
Xiewu
Yaolin Xianjing
Hangzhou City
Tonglu
Qililong Canyon
Shaoxing City
Zhuji
Chun'an
Fuchunjiang
Shengzhou
Qiandaohu Lake
(Xin'an Reservoir)
Fuchunjiang — Xin'anjiang
Jiande
Xinchang
Pujiang
Qianjiangyuan Forest Park
Yiwu
Gutianshan
Dongyang
Lanxi
Kaihua
Quzhou City
Longyou
Jinhua
Jinhua City
Pan'an
Qujiang District
Changshan
Quzhou
Dapanshan
Ziweishan
Yongkang
Fangyan
Xianju
Wuyi
Changshan
Xianju
Jiangxi Province
Jiangshan
Qujiang River
Xiandu
Jinyun
Taizhou
Baimashan
Suichang
North Mt Yandangshan
Jianglangshan
Lishui
Songyang
Jiulongshan
Nanxijiang
Lishui City
Qingtian
Yongjia
Longquan
Yunhe
Shimendong
JiangXinyu Isle
Wenzhou
Ouhai District
Jingning She Autonomous County
Fenyangshan
Baizhangji
Longwan District
Wencheng
Ruian
Beijing
Baishanzu Natural Reserve
Wuyunling
Feiyunhu
Pingyang
Zhejiang Province
Qingyuan
Taishun
Wenzhou City
Cangnan
South Mt. Yandangshan
Fujian Province

Transport & Tourist Map of Zhejiang


Shanghai
inghu
Shengsi
Hangzhou Bay
Zhoushan City
Danshan
Cixi
Yuyao
Zhoushan
Zhenhai District
Dinghai District
Beilun District
Putuo District
Zhujiajian
Mt Putuoshan
Putuo Sea
Ningbo
Qinzhou District
Tiantongsi temple
Xiaoniaoshitang
ikou
baoshan
Fenghua
Ningbo City
Xiangshan
Niubishan Watercourse
East China Sea
Tiantaishan
Ninghai
Ninghai
tai
Sanmen
Shanmenwan Bay
Jiangnan Changcheng
Linhai
Baidaimen
Taozhu Ancient Town
Huangyan District
Taizhou
Taizhou Bay
Luqiao District
Fangshan
Changyudongtian
Wenling
Yuhuan
Yueqing
Dongtou
East China Sea
Legend
Provincial capital
Prefecture capital
County seat
Township
Prefecture boundary
Province boundary
Railway
Highway
Highway under construction
State highway
Provincial highway
Canal
Airport
Scenic spot
Nanjing
Suzhou
Xuancheng
220
67
Shanghai
130
59
Huzhou
Jiaxing
22
Tongxiang
26
Jiashan
Lin'an
95
190
66
35
Huangshan
Hangzhou
Zhapu
178
92
59
Fuyang
Tonglu
44
Shaoxing
140
80
103
90
Zhoushan
Qiandaohu
78
132
58
Zhuji
50
Ningbo
45
Jiande
113
Pujiang
96
Cixi
33
Fenghua
Baifeng
20
51
58
Yiwu
60
114
Zhuge Bagua Village
Lanxi
18
Dongyang
Xinchang
28
51
57
30
Jinhua
102
Yongkang, Mt Fangyan
80
Tiantai
113
38
48
Nanchang
280
30
Longyou
34
47
Quzhou
Xianju
Linhai
50
Xiandu
194
Taizhou
147
128
Lishui
40
Leqing, Mt Yandangshan
40
200
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60
66
Fuzhou
Fuding
Cangnan
Wenzhou

A Diagram Showing the Mileage of Highways in Zhejiang

Distance unit = km

The West Lake Through the Ages

Photos • Xie Guanghui Article • Tao Ran

*Originally a lagoon formed from a shallow bay where the Qiantangjiang River meets the East China Sea,
the West Lake is the ageless pearl of Hangzhou.
From reflections of the rising hills shimmering on its surface to charming views from atop those same slopes,
the lake and its surroundings provide untold pleasing perspectives.
Hangzhou's natural beauty flourishes in four distinct seasons: peach blossoms greet visitors in spring;
lotuses burst open in summer; the scent of the osmanthus fills the autumn air; and plum blossoms blaze in winter.
Certain scenic spots are best viewed at different times of the year as well. Su Dyke bathes in springtime dawns,
while lotus flowers blown by the summer breeze enchant Quyuan Garden.
The autumn moon hangs large and low over the tranquil lake until winter,
when snow delicately blankets the Broken Bridge.
Rainy days, when the lake and hills are blurred by mist, suggest a fairy world.
A stroll through such serenity, beyond the urban tumult, is truly restful.
Float on the water until the sun sets behind the hills, letting your thoughts drift in the moonlight,
and for a moment illusion and reality become indistinguishable.*

Home of Legends

*Over the centuries, the West Lake has borne witness to numerous love stories.
Xiling Bridge was associated with a tragic affair between talented singing girl Su Xiaoxiao and a scholar.
The Legend of White Snake is also set on this sensuous lake.
The touching melody of the Butterfly Lovers reminds us of the deep love
between Liang Shanbo and Zhu Yingtai.
The West Lake is also the final resting place of many heroes, including Qiu Jin,
a woman and revolutionary active in China's modern democratic movement, and Wu Song,
a courageous character in Outlaws of the Marsh. Yue Fei, a general framed by the traitor Qin Hui,
died being persecuted for his resistance to the Jin invading from the north.*

An à La Mode City

*As many international brand-name shops move in, the lakeside road is becoming a popular shopping district.
Despite the bustling surroundings, the secluded residences of the late Peking opera artist Gai Jiaotian
and Chinese democratic revolutionary, thinker and scholar Zhang Taiyan,
along with the tea and silk museums, still woo visitors interested in traditional Chinese culture.
When night falls, the bars along Nanshan Road fill with Latin dance aficionados
and jazz enthusiasts who sip their cups of coffee or tea late into the evening.*

The West Lake at dawn

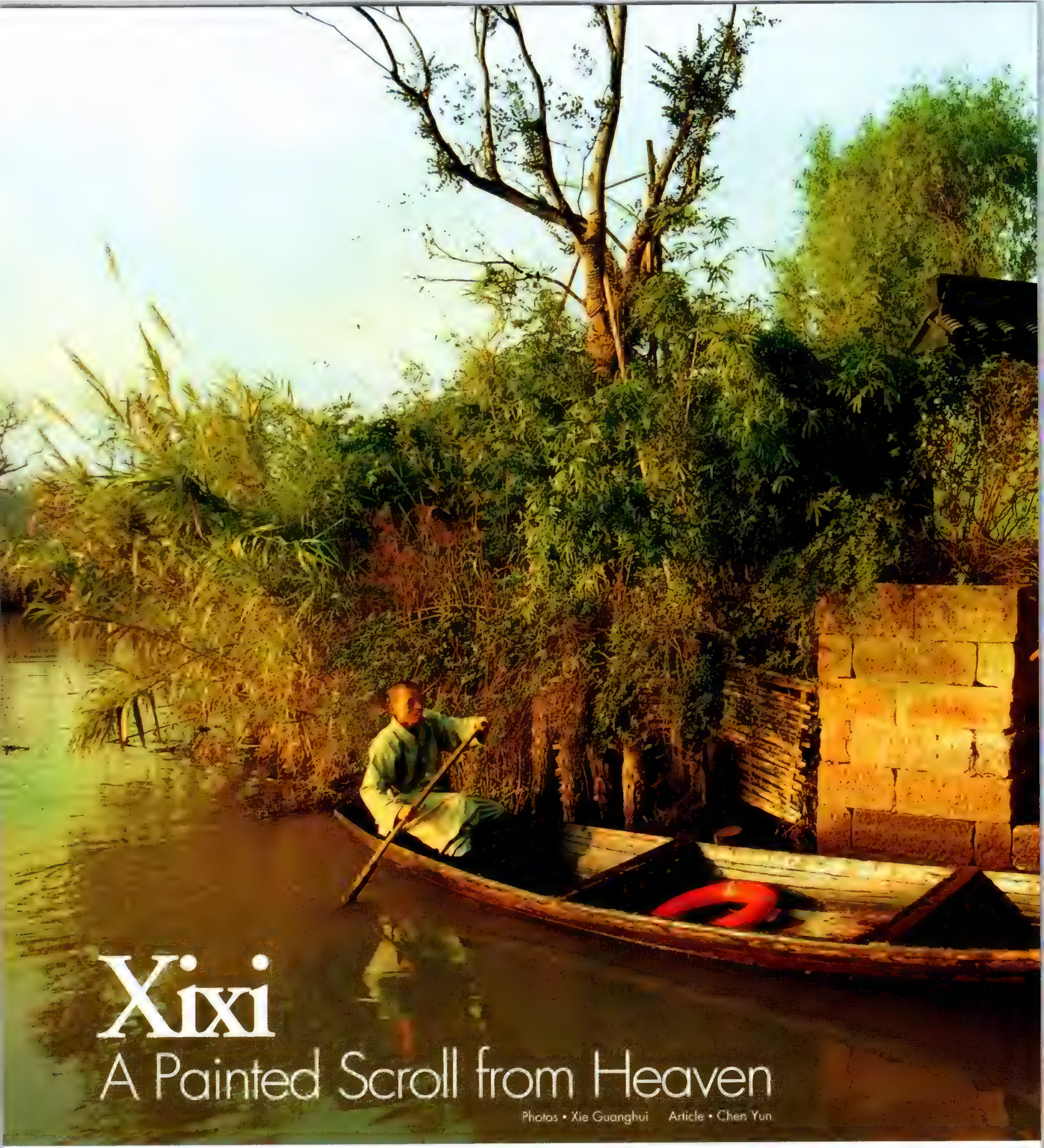
The leaf-shaped boat, known locally as *shou hua chuan* (hand-rowed boat) or *xi hua chuan* (West Lake hand-rowed boat), is a unique sightseeing vessel. Hire one for a fascinating view of the lake's many scenic spots

Wooden causeways built along the dykes help tourists explore the lake more closely

Quyuan Garden at dawn

Marisfrolg
Marisfrolg

The modern shopping street alongside the new West Lake



Xixi

A Painted Scroll from Heaven

Photos • Xie Guanghui Article • Chen Yun

Thanks to the foresight of Northern Song Dynasty (960—1127) leader Emperor Gaozong who moved the capital from Kaifeng to Hangzhou during his reign, the natural surroundings of nearby Xixi (West Stream) have remained unblemished to this day. A large wetland, Xixi is home to countless bird species. Throughout history, it has also served as a retreat for scholars. Had the emperor built his new capital here as first intended, the entire layout and history of Hangzhou would have been completely different.

Perched on an islet, Qiuxue Nunnery is accessible by boat

Compared to the world-famous West Lake, Xixi is generally only familiar to locals and a small number of scholars. I travelled to Xixi in autumn when there were few tourists, so it was very quiet.

Xixi by Moonlight

Xixi's hypnotic beauty intensifies after nightfall. As day gives way to evening, the wetland calms down until the only sounds are those of the bamboo dancing in the breeze and the insects chirping in the undergrowth. No wonder people love to take boats out on Xixi under the light of the moon. Disturbed by rowing oars, fluffy clusters of reed catkins float on the air, creating the sensation of snow in the reed marshes. A sip of wine can bring on a trance that builds to a high pitch of excitement and may even result in a joyful dance.

Xixi lies west of Hangzhou. When the river warms up in springtime, fish flock to the surface for a breath of fresh air. As if to show their enthusiasm, birds twitter animatedly in the trees. Brave sparrows land on the road to look for food, a Chinese bulbul rests on a bright yellow flower, and the insects sing out their delight at the end of winter's torpor.

Abandoned boats linger among the reeds, as the once-dominant form of transport on the vast marshes is replaced by brand new motor vehicles.

Standing on a boat in this splendid ambience, I felt compelled to remember the history of this great waterway. Xixi, also known as the Yanshan River, belongs to the Nanzhang Lake water system. After Emperor Gaozong of the Song Dynasty moved to Hangzhou, he often went to Dongxiao Taoist Monastery in nearby Yuhang to offer incense. He initially decided to build his imperial palace here, but later changed his mind and chose another site at the foot of Fenghuang (Phoenix) Mountain. When asked about Xixi's fate, the emperor said, "Just leave it there." So Xixi was left untouched and has remained so for nearly 1,000 years. The feudal monarch's pronouncement ensured Xixi's primitive beauty to this very day.

Enduring Charm

The literati are often the first to discover, appreciate and publicize the most interesting places and Xixi is no exception. Its attractions have fascinated writers and thinkers through the ages. The thatched cottages, bamboo fences, Buddhist temples, quiet nunneries, stone bridges, winding paths, emerald reeds and ruby persimmons, rushing currents, ancient willows, fishing boats and returning crows, and so many other details, all stimulate the poetic sensibility. Visiting scholars, scribes and artists, freed by Xixi's untamed landscape, have been moved to celebrate its beauty in their poems and paintings. One of them, Yang Pan, a scholar from the Northern Song Dynasty, wrote that he loved Xixi so much that he feared the water would dry up some day.

From the Southern Song to the Ming (1368—1644) and Qing (1644—1911) dynasties, Xixi was a Shangri-la for both local residents and religious recluses. Many temples - Fahua, Yongxing, Fohui and Dasulin - were also built in this secluded place. The drawn-out tolling of the bells, the curling incense smoke,

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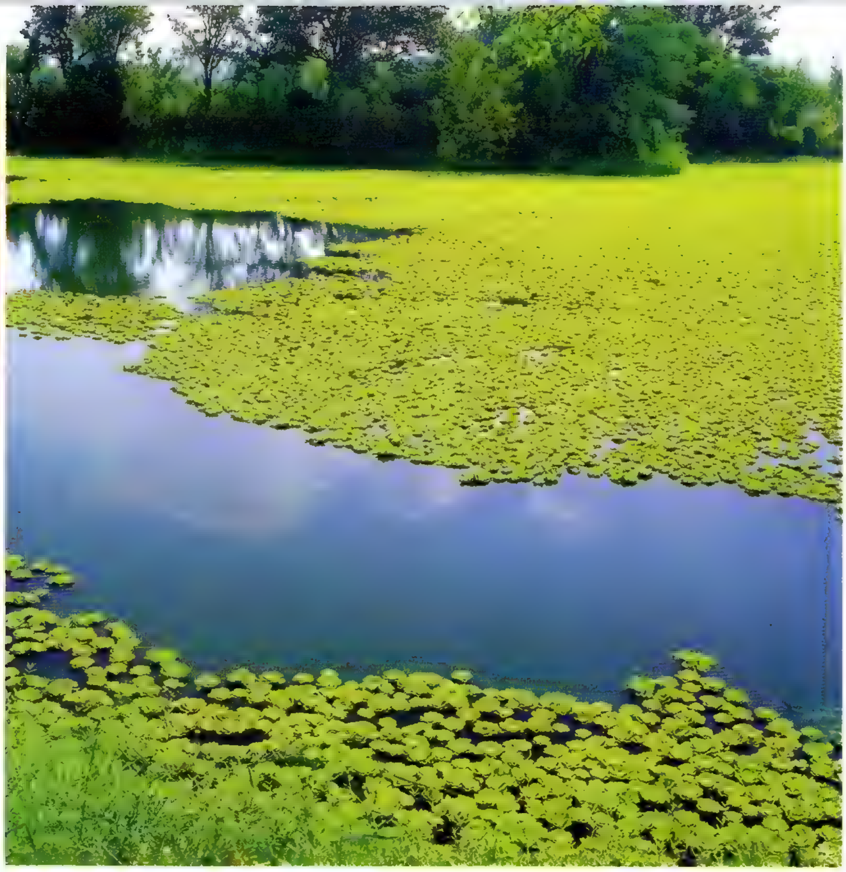
3



the exotic plants and the naturally picturesque setting appealed to men of letters as a haven for solitary study and a place to gather and exchange ideas.

In late autumn, sprawling reeds turn Xixi into a silvery world, prompting visitors to drink in both the scenery and good wine until they are inspired to pen their own poems and pictures. More than 1,000 poems have thus been recorded.

Among these are works by Emperor Kangxi of the Qing Dynasty, the poet Xu Zhimo (1896—1931) and Zhu Shenghao (1912—1944), the famous translator who introduced Shakespeare's plays to China. Few, it seems, can resist Xixi's enduring charm.

Wetland Finally Preserved

Wetlands are natural reservoirs on land. Home to wild flora and fauna, they especially benefit rare waterfowl as breeding and wintering grounds. Supplying essential water and food, a wetland is often referred to as a "cradle of life", a "kidney of the earth" and a "paradise for birds". That such an oasis is so close to a modern city makes Xixi's wetland habitat all the more wonderful.

The water, wildness, wetland scenery and cultural history of Xixi are well worth a visit. After touring the West Lake, Xixi should be your next stop.

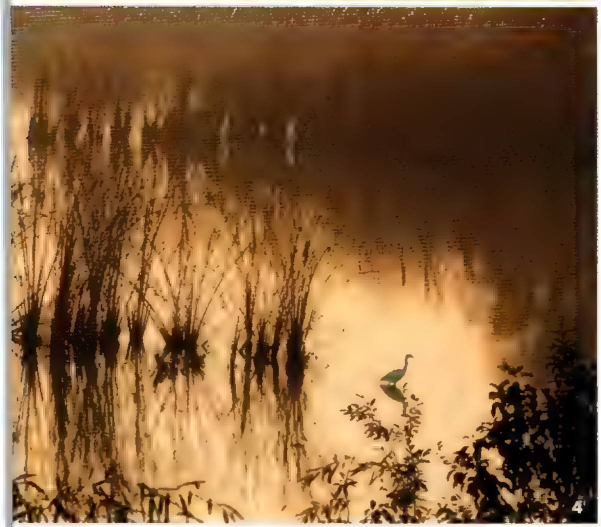
1. Near the bustling metropolis of Hangzhou, the Xixi wetland abounds in both water and land-based flora and fauna

2. A rich supply of fish and shrimp lures egrets to Xixi (by Zheng Congli)

3. West of Hangzhou, Xixi covers 10 sq km, 70 per cent of which is ponds and streams

4. Xixi is the "kidney of Hangzhou" and a "paradise for birds"

5. China's first state wetland park, Xixi is dotted by marshlands, lakes and ponds (by Zheng Congli)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Open to Tourists in Part

Some 900 years have elapsed since Emperor Gaozong gazed on Xixi. With the launch of the Xixi Wetland Protection Project in the 21st century, this wetland is spared from the massive development going on everywhere else in China today.

The protected zone has three sections: an eco-conservancy area in the east; an eco-tourist area in the centre; and an eco-protection area in the west. In the east, the goal is to preserve and develop the ecological environment. As the area will be closed to foster the growth of primitive swamps, tourists are banned. The area in the west will also be closed for a time. Since the centre section contains many cultural relics, it is open to tourists. Visitors can tour the Shentankou village of folk culture, the Chaotianyang waterside sightseeing area, the historical and cultural area around Nanzhang Lake, and the Qiuxue and Qushui nunneries.

Hangzhou:

Where Relaxation Reigns

Photos [illegible] Guanghui Article Wang Zhen

The people of Hangzhou have excelled in the pursuit of leisure since ancient times. The beguiling tradition handed down by the Southern Song scholars, the languid breezes over the West Lake, the smartly designed bars and cafes, and the scent of the surrounding tea plantations complement the bourgeois languidness and even narcissism inherent in this city.

Hangzhou's locals pass much of their time in teahouses, bars and restaurants. The lush West Lake area seems to have made its people soft and delicate, much like the lake water, and the pace of their lives is as slow as that of a fairy tale. Yet this relaxed rhythm allows for a fuller appreciation of life.

Xihu Tiandi: A Place of Dreams

The Xihu Tiandi (World of the West Lake) near Yongjin Pool can be rated, together with the city itself, as the 11th West Lake scenic spot. Its swaying willows, stone bridges, bamboo curtains and painted towers and terraces add to the fairy tale feeling. Like any other woman drawn to a bourgeois lifestyle, I love to stroll along and pop into the time-honoured shops.

Gu Mei Xiu is my favourite. The owner, a Shanghai graduate from a school of fine arts, collected antiques for nearly 10 years before opening this shop. She once had a pleated skirt of pure silk dyed with natural plant pigments that had belonged to a Qing noble lady on display. It could not be washed as the colours would have blurred, which explains why ancient noble women would wear their dresses only once and then pack them away for funeral

Bai Dyke, linking the Broken Bridge to the east with Gushan Hill to the west, is more than 1,000 years old—the oldest dyke along the lake. Morning exercise amidst the swaying willows and blooming peach trees is invigorating (by Yuan Jianchen)

objects. Such delicate fabrics deserve the lifelong love of women, so many of whom take delight in these shops, and the fine embroidery work echoes the dreams of women from every era.

Drinking tea at Fu Lin Tang evokes a different feeling from most teahouses. Originally an herbal medicine store first opened in Yunnan in 1857, it offers a variety of healthful snacks and beverages. As odd as it may sound, I became a bit sentimental as Lin Daiyu and Xue Baochai, the two main women characters in A Dream of Red Mansions, came to mind. The former had to take various medicines from the time she was weaned, while the latter took pills to cure her asthma all year round.

Chamate, or Yi Cha Yi Zuo, interweaves modern design elements with a traditional Chinese architectural style. Each time I visit, it reminds me of the comforts of home. I usually order a cup of kung fu tea, or superior Taiwan Jinxuan, fragrant oolong or just a fruity tea, all of which are my favourites.

Zen Chinese Restaurant stands out for the natural wood and rattan that give it a quite modern look. The Southeast Asian flavour of its dishes caters to modern palates as well. Fried fish with garlic entertains both the taste buds and the eyes, while the fruit drinks and desserts are mouth watering. The warm interior makes one almost giddy, in the way you might feel after a particularly romantic date. Speaking of which, the Haagen-Dazs and Starbucks next door are good meeting places for sweethearts. Occupying the best locations around the world as usual, this Starbucks lets the moonlight in through its French windows. I love to sit back on a comfortable sofa with a latte in hand and gaze out at the tangle of paths winding through the lakeside bamboo.

The buildings of Xihu Tiandi are old residences with long histories. American designer Benjamin Wood has my utmost respect; I'm amazed that a

foreigner could have dovetailed Hangzhou's characteristic features so flawlessly into his blueprints. Little changes were made to the old structures, and the white walls and black tiles, the engravings on the eaves, and the zigzagging corridors were all kept intact. The large glass windows were added only to expand the breathtaking views of the gardens.

People come here from all over the country in search of nostalgia or the latest trend. Even expatriates like the designer come to sit and look out at the flourishing peach, the water lily floating on the pond or the drooping cherry blossom. Whether accompanied by a gentle breeze or a light snow, the effect is that of a dreamland.

Mei Jia Wu, Home to Longjing Tea

Hangzhou people can be quite fastidious about their pleasures. In search of the perfect cup of tea, they will visit every fine teahouse by the West Lake. The truly discerning will travel all the way to Mei Jia Wu, where Longjing (Dragon Well) tea is grown.

The road to Mei Jia Wu is fairly quiet, with just a few vehicles passing by. As we drive, endless green fields shrouded in mist stretch out on either side beyond which lies Mei Jia Wu, hidden. It is worth visiting for the fresh air alone, to say nothing of the appetising delicacies and fragrant tea that await you.

The locals know how to enjoy life and everyone has their favourite restaurants. Regular patrons become good friends with the owners. A friend and I often visit an eatery run by Mei, a local resident. The spacious two-story building is bright and clean with a large veranda that leads to a tea garden. On fine days, we sit outside and drink cup after cup amidst the fragrant tea trees.

The Qingming (Clear Brightness) Festival in early April is the busiest time for tea growers, as well as the best season for Longjing tea. In the morning mist, women in bamboo or straw hats carry their baskets up to the hillside tea plantations. They talk together animatedly as they nimbly pick the tea leaves. Afterwards they brew the new tea in their courtyards and on their front stoops, serving the first infusions to eager customers from near and far. With such a ready market, the new tea sells out almost as soon as it's poured.

Those lucky enough to sample tea made from leaves picked before the festival are in for a treat. In boiling water, the flat, even leaves gradually extend until a sprout is revealed. As the water slowly turns a crystal green, the tea's sweet scent fills the air.

With a cup of tea comes tenderness. Even the most impatient person becomes calmer and takes their

1. A chat by the lake at sunset

2. Longjing lies on the Fenghuang Ridge west of the West Lake. Tea is harvested during the Qingming and Guyu (Grain Rain) festivals, which usually fall in April. Tourists can taste the freshest tea at that time

time sipping and enjoying their tea, while the lingering aroma can make worries disappear.

If you happen to have some tea-growing friends, visit them for one or two weeks and eat your fill of their homemade dishes. Enjoy the fresh mountain air or a promenade along a street of teahouses. Cleanse your throat with a fragrant brew, rejuvenate your digestive system with organic vegetables and free yourself from the additives typically found in spicy, oily city food.

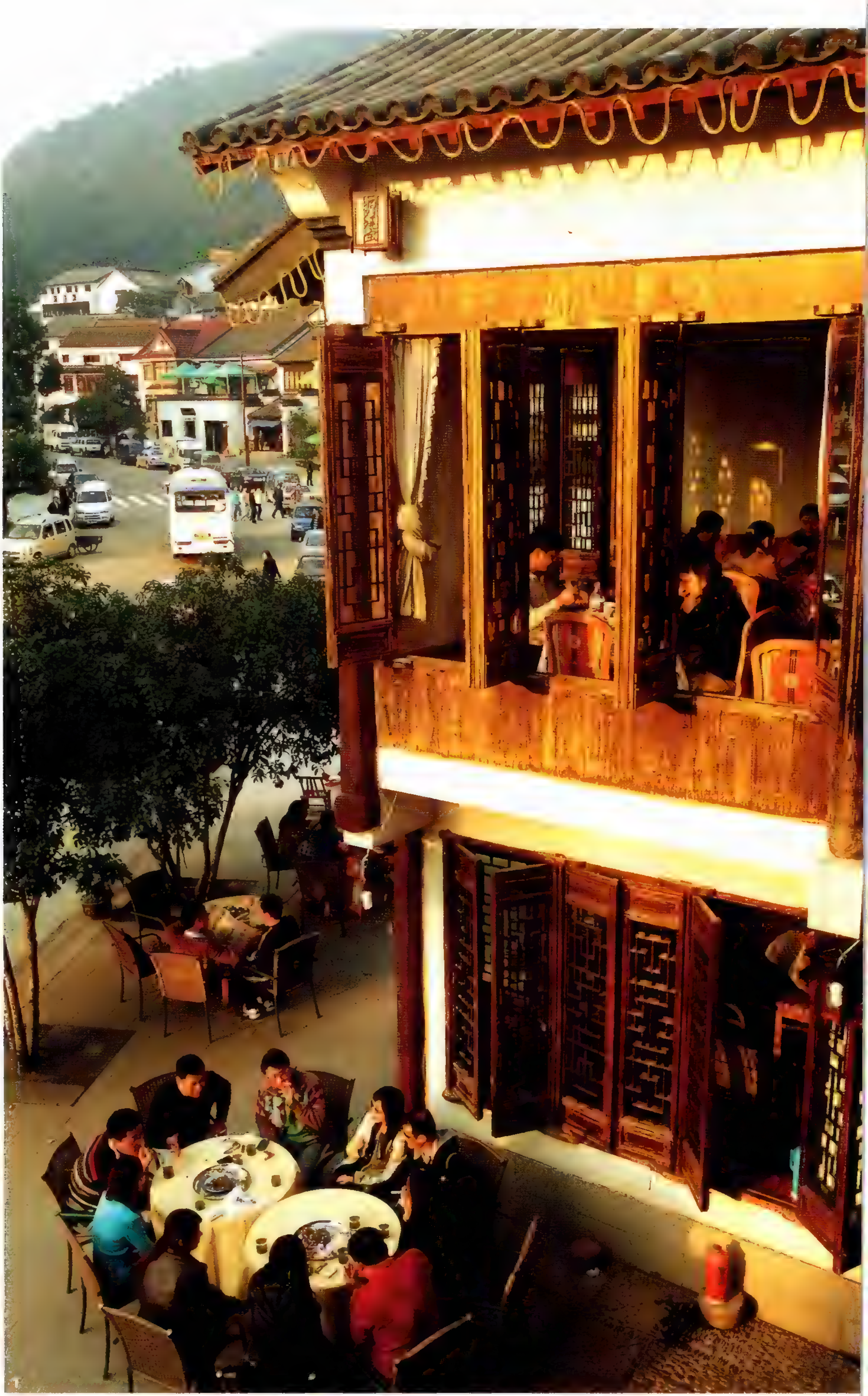
Nanshan Road: Where Old Harmonizes with New

Nanshan (South Hill) Road runs for 2,600 metres between the West Lake and Changqiao Park. If you don't know the road itself, you may have heard of the prestigious fine arts academy located there. The many galleries and bars staggered along the road reflect its graceful, romantic aura.

From the picturesque lake to the west, wend your way east through the cultural hub, viewing paintings and drinking tea while listening to music. The overgrown chinar trees and the villas behind, the neon-lit bars and restaurants resemble Shanghai's Hengshan Road or Beijing's Sanlitun area near the embassy district, both expatriate haunts.

Interspersed among the trendy structures are some classical constructions: the former residence of modern Chinese artist Pan Tianshou (1898—1971); the blue-bricked buildings at Guangfuli; the yellow house that was part of an old hospital at one end of Liuying Road; the green villa of Chiang Ching-kuo (1910—1988, eldest son of Chiang Kai-shek and late leader of Taiwan); Henglu Cultural Centre; and the former residence of Chinese architect Mao Yisheng (1896—1989). Each has been restored to its original appearance. Other structures have been updated, including the European-style building at one end of Hefang Street and the modern glass house at Guangfuli.

There are also many bars, teahouses, cafes and ice-cream and chocolate shops to temp the casual customer and the connoisseur. The newer shops may surprise those who haven't visited in awhile. "C Straits Cafe" and "Bernini" are among the hip chain cafes that have opened, while cutting edge bar "Day and Night" is run by a Chinese returned from studying overseas. But those bent on the familiar will still find their beloved teahouses, such as "Weng Long Sheng", "Liu Ying Yuan" and "Cha Ren Jiu", in operation. The Spanish food served at the yellow house, the green buildings that imitate Shanghai's Xintiandi and the pottery display at Guangfuli are particularly popular. For an open air cafe, try the Linhu Hotel or the Memorial Hall of Pan Tianshou and sip



1. At Meijiawu, Hangzhou residents drink tea and visit in a leisurely manner

2. Tourists can sit for clay busts of themselves on Hefang Street

3. Eating out on Hefang Street is a Hangzhou tradition

4. A jazz performance at a Nanshan Road bar

2

3

4

tea under the large sunshade.

Witness to countless events on the West Lake, Nanshan Road has become a synonym for leisure and the classically romantic life.

Hefang Street: Touching a Woman's Soul

For me, Hefang Street provides the best entertainment. Anyone wishing to imagine themselves as a character from history can easily indulge their fancy here.

Renovated in 2002, the street cannot hide evidence of its recent facelift. Still, it maintains a decent distance from the present-day bustle of Hangzhou. The storefronts — all paint-free wooden structures, with their black tile and white walls and stone slab pavements - demurely whisper of their long history.

The scent of herbs has permeated Tong Chun Tang since it first opened in 1649 under the reign of Qing Emperor Tongzhi. On the right side of the lobby stands a thermos full of *kuding* tea (also known as bitter tea) for visitors and patients. After drinking the brew, patrons often find the aroma sweet and warm rather than bitter.

The Hu Qing Yu Tang state drugstore dwarfs all the other buildings. The gilded prescriptions on the walls of the main hall along with the rare and reasonably priced medicinal herbs speak of the shop's commitment to quality and honesty.

Jin Tai Xiang is a large store selling lavish silk goods, from bolts of fabric to simple underwear. No wonder Marco Polo was shocked at the abundance of silk he saw in this country. Silk is put to every possible use in Hangzhou. Tang Charms, Love Story and several other shops renowned for their expert needlework, offer *chi-pao* and traditional Chinese suits.

Of the many shops, Ming Yuan Ge's antiques, Pin Shi Xuan's bloodstones, Ji Xiang Fang's silk quilts, Wei Ming Lou's steamed stuffed vegetable buns, Yi Gen Yuan's root sculptures, Wu Yue Ren Jia's batik goods, De Yi Yuan's silverware, Xihu Chashe's new tea, Shuangqiang Zhumu's chopsticks and the five-metre-long tobacco pipe at Xiangyanguan are all worth a visit. Each time I go to Hefang Street I amble from one shop to the next from morning to night.

What is it about this ancient street that affects me so? I have asked myself this question time and again, but I can never pinpoint a single answer. As I walk from traditional Hefang Street to vogue Yan'an Road, I turn my head to look back once more at the sedan-chair that swings in the breeze in the middle of the avenue. The sound of the gongs soothes me, but at the same time I feel a slight emptiness, for I know I cannot take any of it away with me. At that moment, I begin to miss Hefang.

Translated by Julia Han

Travel Tips of Hangzhou

Suggested Itineraries in Hangzhou

One-day Routes in West Lake:

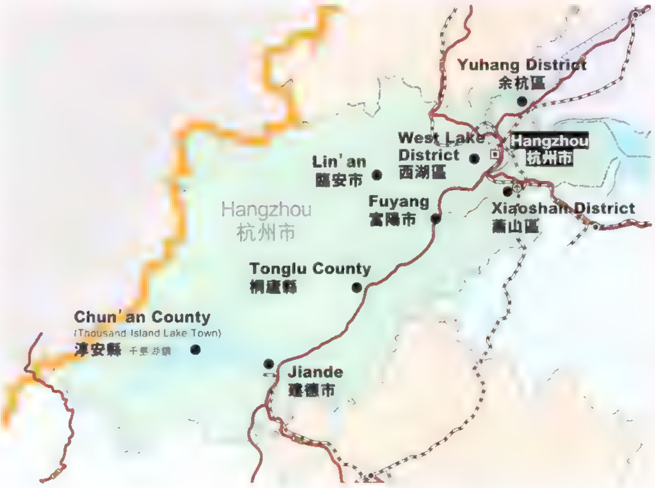
Route A: In the morning, take photos in Lingyin Temple (Feilai Peak); visit Yue Fei Temple, then stroll at Yanggong Dyke and Huagang Park; after visitng Leifeng Tower, roll a boat on West Lake, passing the famous site "San Tan Yin Yue" (Three Ponds Reflecting the Moon); disembark at Yongjin Park, enjoy a cup of coffee at Xihu Tiandi. If time allows, visit Chenghuang Temple and Qinghefang Street nearby.

Route B: In the morning, take photos in Lingyin Temple (Feilai Peak), visit Yue Temple, Hupao (Tiger Run) and Huanglong (Yellow Dragon) caves; rolling boat on West Lake, passing San Tan Yin Yue; visit Xihu Tiandi tourist area, Chenghuang Temple and Qinghefang Street.

Route on the lake: The best method to visit West Lake is rowing a boat on it. According to individual interest, choose to aboard at Yuehu Lake or Chongshan Park. Last but not least, you must try the unforgettable dishes at West Lake restaurants.

North Route: Visit Lingyin Temple, Yue Fei Temple, Qu Yuan Feng He (lotus garden), Yanggong Dyke, etc. If time allows, you can try Longjing tea in town, visit the Museum of China Tea, Huanglong Cave, Mt Bao Shi (Treasure Stone), etc. Transportation: Take bus No. 7 or tourist bus No. 2 at Hu Bin or Guan Xiang Kou stations.

South Route: Visit Liuhe Tower, Hu Pao Cave, Huagang Harbour, Taizi (Prince) Bay Park, Zhengci Temple, Leifeng Tower, Mt Yuhuang, etc. If time allows, you may also visit Yun Qi bamboo path, Nine Streams and 18 Gullies, Man Jue Long (an area between the Nangao Peak and White Crane Peak of Mt Wushan in Hangzhou, best place to appreciate osmanthus flowers), Yanxia Caves, Museum of Government Dwellings of Southern Song Dynasty. Transportation: Take bus No. 308 or tourist bus No. 2 at Long Xiang Qiao, Hu Bin, or Qing Bo Men stations.



Transportation:

- Flight:

The airport is situated at Xiaoshan District, it is 27 km away from the town centre. You can get the airport shuttle bus at the entrance of the ticket office. The bus departs every 15 ~ 30 minutes, while the whole journey is about 50 minutes. The ticket costs 15 yuan each. It will cost about 90 ~ 100 yuan to take a taxi to the airport.

- Railway (ticket booking website: www.zjrail.com, Chinese only)

There are two passenger railway stations in Hangzhou. One is situated at Hangzhou railway station at the town centre, and the other one is Hangzhou east railway station situated at the east point of Wenfei Road. You can travel to cities like Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin, Chungxin, Guangzhou, Xi'an, Nanjing, etc by railway in Hangzhou.

- Long-distance vehicle ticket booking website: www.hzcy.com (Chinese only)

Departing Hangzhou, you can travel to cities like Shanghai, Nanjing, Qingdao, Shenzhen, Ningbo, etc or to districts like Huang shan. It needs 4 hours at most to arrive at any cities in Zhejiang Province. There are north, east south and west four stations for Hangzhou long-distance vehicle. For the convenience of visitors, there is free inter-change vehicle traveling to and from public road and railway. Enquiries can be made through (571) 8604 6666

- Hangzhou transportation website: www.hzbus.com.cn

Bus: 1 yuan; air-conditioned bus: 2 yuan; tourist bus (with a "Y" before the route number): 3 ~ 5 yuan. There is no change service mostly, you can use IC card.

- Cruise from Hangzhou to Suzhou: (571) 8515 3360 (hotline of the Beijing-Hangzhou Great Canal)

This is the only travelling route to and from Hangzhou and Suzhou in Jiangsu Province along the Beijing-Hangzhou Great Canal. Ships depart in the evening and arrive in the morning, there is no intermediate station. The ticket price is 70 ~ 150 yuan.

Accommodation:

- Shangri-la Hangzhou (5-star)

Features: It is surrounded by beautiful lakeside and hillside scene. The lakeside scene, which inspires most poets and artists, attracts many famous people to visit. The spots nearby include Su Dyke, Bai Dyke, Gushan Island, lotus garden and Lingyin Temple, etc.

78 Beishan Road, Hangzhou, Zheiiang Province

(571) 8562 9969 Rate: 500 ~ 800 yuan

- Hangzhou Central Holiday Inn

There is clean environment and convenient transportation. It situates at the centre of commerce and culture. It only needs a few minutes to walk to West Lake. And there are the Xinhua Bookshop, Hangzhou Jiebai Commercial Building, Yuan Hua Shopping Centre, and Jia Le Fu Supermarket nearby.

200 Jiefang Raod, Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province

(571) 8702 8668 Rate: 150 ~ 300 yuan

- Garden Youth Hostel

It situates on the west route of the Zhaogong Dyke of West Lake. The famous spots nearby include lotus garden, Lingyin Temple, etc. There is also a bar street nearby.

4 Zhaogong Dyke, Yanggong Dyke, Hangzhou

(571)87975883 Rate: 50 ~ 200 yuan (membership discount)

翻中居青年旅舍
GARDEN YOUTH HOSTEL

Garden Youth Hostel in Hangzhou (by Suzan So)

Scenic Spots in Hangzhou

1. West Lake

West Lake is a famous scenic spot in China situating at the western side of the Hangzhou city. Ancient poets have compared West Lake with a famous beautiful girl.

By ships or boats. Ship: 45 yuan per person; leisure boat: 45 per person; rowing boat 80 yuan per hour.

2. Gushan Island, Xiling Seal-Engraving Society

Gushan (Alone Hill) is the only natural island on West Lake, there are many historic sites in this district. Southern Song Emperor Lizong, Qing Emperor Kangxi and Qianlong had chosen to build their resorts there. Xiling Seal-Engraving Society is the most famous spot on Gushan. It is well-known of its elegance and pleasant gardening arts, which were appreciated by most Chinese famous poets.

Bus No. 7, Y9 or 850

Opening hours: 08:30 ~ 1630 (Xiling), 07:30 to 18:30 (Gushan)

3. Osmanthus Flowers in Man Jue Long

It situates at the valley of southern slope of Nan Gao (South High) Peak on Mt Wushan. From very long ago, monks in Man Jue Long Temple planted osmanthus flower. In every eighth lunar month, the enchanting smell of the flowers cover the whole area.

Transportation: Bus No. Y3, 4 or 504

Opening hours: 08:30 ~ 16:30

10 yuan

4. Lingyin Temple

Lingyin Temple was built in 326. There are over thousands of buildings and over 3,000 monks at its peak. It is the oldest Buddhist temple in West Lake.

Bus No. 7, Y1 or Y2

07:00 ~ 16:45

30 yuan (Lingyin Temple); 35 yuan (Feilai Peak)

5. Leifeng Tower

The tower was ordered by an emperor to build to celebrate the birth of a prince in ancient times. It was also the place where Lady White was imprisoned as described in the Legend of White Snake. The original tower was fallen in 1924. In 2000, it was re-built on the same site, with a height of 71.96 metres.

Bus No. Y1, Y9 or 4

Opening hours 07:30 ~ 21:00

Admission 40 yuan

6. Bap Pu Taoist Temple

It was built in the Jin Dynasty (265—420) in memorial of Master Gehong (284-364), a famous philosopher, scientist and chemist.

Bus No. 7, 27 or Y9

06:00 ~ 16:30

5 yuan

Bao Pu Taoist Temple (by Jackie Tsang)

7. Xixi National Wetland Park

It situates at less than 5 km away from West Lake, it was as famous as West Lake. It is ranked number one in China and is the only united agricultural and cultural wetland.

It takes 20 minutes to travel from the town centre by taxi, the fares will be about 25 yuan

Opening hours 0830 ~ 1630

40 yuan (free on Monday)

40 yuan

www.xixiwetland.com.cn

8. Mei Jia Wu Tea Culture Village

The whole village is surrounded by hills and mountains, the famous green tea—West Lake's Longjing (Dragon Well) is produced here. It is a good place to have a cup of Chinese green tea and farmers' dishes.

Bus No. Y4 or 324

Foreign tourists are interested in silk products (by Xie Guanghui)

9. Xinhua Road Silk Street

It was the spot of trading and producing silk in the Ming and Qing Dynasty. And it is now a boulevard of culture, travel and commerce. More than that, it is the largest silk wholesale and retail market in China.

Bus No. 8, 11 or 28

10. Qinghefeng Ancient Street

It is a miniature of Hangzhou historic culture, it was very prosperous in the Southern Song Dynasty. On this old street, there are nearly 100 shops selling tea, medicine, silk and antiques.

Bus No. 8, 38 or 814

11. Longjing Wen Cha Scenic Area

It is located at the top of Feng Huang Peak, covering a large area of fountain. Longjin Tea is of the best quality within all Chinese tea. Qing Emperor Qianlong had planted 18 Longjing trees on the site before.

Bus No. 27 or Y3

0800 ~ 1730

10 yuan (to visit the 18 Longjing trees planted by Emperor Qianlong)

12. Nanshan Road Leisure Street

Most high-class entertainment are gathered on this street, there are over 100 bars, coffee shops, restaurants and galleries. Within those, artistic cultural gallery of the Chinese arts academy and Pan Tianshou Memorial Museum was the most enchanting.

Bus No. 4, Y9 or 30

13. Hubin Road Commerce and Trading Street

Its length is about 800 metres, it reserves the building styles of east and west. The street is excellent for you to visit, shopping and dining.

14. Wulin Road Fashion Street

It is the origin of Hangzhou Academic Style Lady Fashion. There are now over 200 fashion brands. The whole street is mainly filled with shops selling lady fashion wear; additionally, there are coffee shops, bars, restaurants, beauty centres and salons.

Bus No. 30, 48 or 66

The World Leisure Expo 2006 Hangzhou

The Hangzhou World Leisure Expo is developed by Hangzhou Sung City Group, it costs nearly 3.5 billion. It will be composed of sight-seeing, entertainment, leisure, vacation, conferencing and residence. It is of the first in China.

The EXPO will last for half a year from April 22, 2006 to October 22, 2006 in Xiaoshan of Hangzhou. The World Leisure EXPO consists one lake and three gardens. The size of You Pok Garden is 3,000 hectares, and the total area is about 1.2 million square meters. Xianghu Lake is themed as historic culture and natural scene. The Leisure Garden is mainly for entertainment and conferences. The Customs Garden is a large resort. Eastern Cultural Garden is full of Chinese Culture.

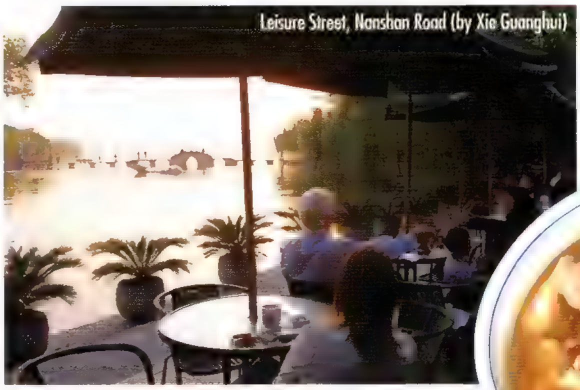
The performing shows will be held in spring, summer and autumn. In order to catch the eyes of the worldwide visitors, some special exhibitions will also be held in April to August 2006. A World Leisure Conference is scheduled in September to October while a firework show is planned at that time as well.

Entrance: Local or international tours, with appointment 7 days in advance

Free admission

(571) 8268 6615

Contact persons. Mr. Shi or Ms Lam



Leisure Street, Nanshan Road (by Xie Guanghui)

Roasted-pork with asparagus soup (by Suzan So)

Specialties:

West Lake sour fish, Longjing tea, silk products, etc

Travel Tips of Suburban Hangzhou

[illegible]

Located south of Qiantangjiang River, it is 10 km away from Hangzhou city centre. Xiaoshan has a long history with unique natural resources. For instance, ruins of the cross-river bridge own a history of 8, 000 years while the Qiantangjiang River is spectacular. Xiaoshan is where the Hangzhou airport locates, and also the host city of the 2006 World Leisure EXPO.

Can be reached by taking bus No. 315, 520 or K515 at Longxiang Bridge Public Transport Terminus in Hangzhou centre.

Thousand Islands Lake New Century Holiday Resort (3-star)

The best place to view the famous Qiantangjiang tidal waves.

Nanyang Town, Xiaoshan District, Hangzhou

(571) 8288 0666 Rate: 260 ~ 580 yuan

Tidal waves of Qiantangjiang River

Having 2,000 years of history, Qiantangjiang River is well-known among the world with its height and variety of the tidal waves. On the days around the 18th day of the eighth lunar month every year, tourists can visit the biggest tidal waves from the river.

Thousand-Island Lake New Century Holiday Resort, Xiaoshan, Hangzhou

Take Bus No. 515 at Longxiang Bridge Terminus in Hangzhou to Xiaoshan, then change other bus.

20 ~ 120 yuan (varies with seasons and tide-watching locations)

Hangzhou Amusement Park, Eastern Cultural Park, Zhejiang Flower City, etc.

Specially-flavoured chicken, Xiaoshan raisin, flower badges

[illegible]

Located west of Hangzhou, it is 30 km away from Hangzhou city centre. It has been praised by many famous ancient poets.

The seat of city government, Fuyang can be reached by Bus No. K514 at Longxiang Bridge Terminus

Longmen Hostel

Nice environment. Guests can taste the delicious agricultural cuisine (Longmen Nong Jia Cai) at lunch in the hostel.

(571) 6350 6168

Longmen (Dragon Gate) Ancient Town

The town is located along the coastal area of Fuchun area. More than 90 per cent local residents are the descendents of the State of Wu during the Three Kingdoms period (??).

Longmen Town, Fuyang (50km away from Hangzhou centre)

Bus No. 514 at Longxiang Bridge Terminus to Fuyang new station, then change bus at west stop.

08:00 ~ 17:00 50 yuan

Quanshan (Songjun Mansion), former residence of Yu Defu (contemporary Chinese writer), peach blossom forest in Fuchun, cultural village of ancient Chinese paper-making, waterfall, Tian Zhong Shan (Heaven's Bell Mountain), Hangzhou Wildlife Zoo, Fuchun Shanju Golfing World, etc.

Local-made gluten, "fairy chicken" from Longmen Hostel, specially-flavoured cow's sirloin, pork or fish, bean-curd sheet, Yunwu (Cloud & Mist) Tea from Anding, etc.

Ancient town of Longmen in Fuyang (by Xie Guanghui)

[illegible]

Situated 20 km away from West Lake, it is the southern end of the Beijing-Hangzhou Great Canal. Boosting magnificent scenery, it is also the birthplace of Liangchu culture.

The seat of district government, Yuhang can be reached by Bus 321, 309 or K509 from Hangzhou centre

Grand Zenith Hotel Hangzhou (4-star)

Features: Conveniently located close to Shanghai-Hangzhou Highway, and 30 minutes to Hangzhou centre and airport.

505 People Avenue, Linping, Yuhang District

Tel: (571) 8623 8888 Rate: 758 yuan (Deluxe Twin)

Rafting on Double Streams

Located 30-plus km from It is rated as a 4-A's tourist zone. It is full of greenery and you may raft on bamboo along the river for visiting.

Double Stream, Yuhang, Hangzhou Town, Zhejiang Province

Can be reached by taking bus No. 513 at Huazhe Plaza in Hangzhou to Pingyao, then change bus to Shuangxi (Double Streams). On weekend, buses depart at 08:30 from Huanglong Centre, or at 08:00 from Wushan Centre.

Rafting on Double Stream in Yuhang (by Xie Guanghui)

07:30 ~ 17:00

60 yuan

Other attraction: Xiaobaicai Customs Village, Jingshan Temple, China Jiangnan Water Towns Culture Museum, Lu Yu Spring, etc.

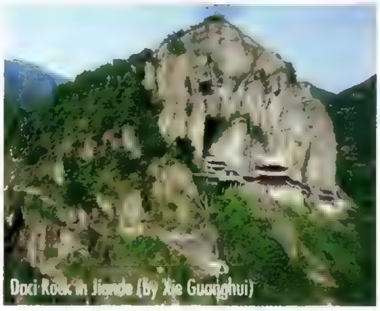
Tangqi's loquat, Chaoshan's candied fruit, Linping's sugarcane, Sanjiacun's lotus root paste, Jingshan tea, etc

[illegible]

Located southwest of Hangzhou, it is 135 km away from Hangzhou city centre. With the Xin'anjiang River running through the city, Jiande is a touristy city with rich flavours of Jiangnan area.

Xian'an Town is the seat of city government, and can be reached by taking buses at Hangzhou West Terminus.

Hangzhou Huanglong Moon Bay Hotel (4-star)



Daci Rock in Jiande (by Xie Guanghui)

Features: Located aside Xin'anjiang River and surrounded by hills.

1 Xin'anjiang Road, Jiande

(571) 6400 0888 500 yuan (Standard)

Daciyan (Great Compassion Rock)

It is well-known for its temples built on the cliffs, a unique scenery in Jiangnan area, long valleys and rivers, and natural rocks which look like Buddha.

Daciyan Town, Jiande

Can be reached by taking bus at Hangzhou West Terminus

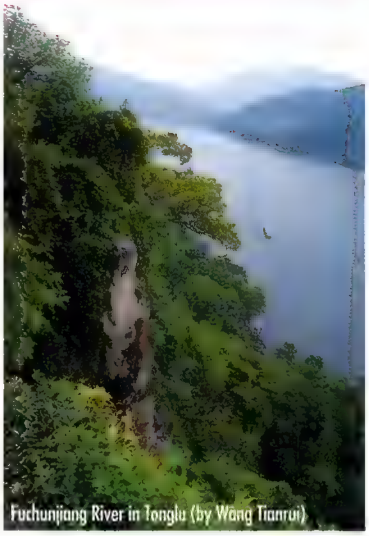
07:30 ~ 16:00

50 yuan

Dragon-boat rafting on Xin'anjiang River, ancient inhabitation in Xinye, misty scene at Xin'anjiang River, Xin'an Hydroelectrical Power Plant, etc.

Yanzhou's duck cooked with wind-dried vegetables, bean-curd, chilly fish, Wujiapi wine, white lotus snack, etc.

Tonglu County


Fuchunjiang River in Tonglu (by Wang Tianrui)

Located northwest of Fuchun River, it is 80 km away from Hangzhou city center, as well as advantageous surround by West Lake, Qiantangjiang River, Fuchunjiang River, Xin'anjiang River, Thousand-Island Lake.

ortation: The county government is located at Tongjun Street, where can be reached by bus from Hangzhou West Terminus.

Red Lantern Xiaomuwu Tourist Resort (2-star)

The resort is combined by 48 huts of different styles.

Inside Red Lantern Waipojia (Grandma's Home) Scenic Area, Tonglu County

(571) 6437 1329

Rate: 160 yuan (including entrance ticket to Tonglu Scenic Area)

Hangzhou Tonglu Babisong Int'l Youth Hostel

Only 10 minutes' walk to Mt Daqishan National Forest Park, suitable for backpackers.

Close to Mt Daqishan National Forest Park, Tonglu County

(571) 6460 8666 Rate: 200 yuan (Twin-bed)

Yan Ziling Fishing Terrace

Legend says it was where Yan Ziling, a renowned literati of the Eastern Han Dynasty, became a hermit and went fishing.

Fuchun Town, Tonglu County (98 km away from Hangzhou centre)

Take bus at Hangzhou West Terminus to Tonglu, then change another bus

08:00 ~ 16:30

85 yuan (including entrance to Lesser Three Gorges of Fuchunjiang River and Longmen Bay)

Mt Tongjunshan, Rafting on Tianmuxi Stream, Red Lantern scenic area, etc.

Sacked chicken, roasted Ziling fish, sweet and sour fish, Tianzun Gongya tea, honey products, etc.

Lin'an City

Located west of Hangzhou, it is 40 km away from Hangzhou city centre. It is known as home for bamboos, walnuts, and civil arts in China.

Jincheng Town is the seat of city government, can be reached by bus No. K598 at the Hangzhou West Terminus.

Lin'an Hotel (3-star)

Being the tallest building in Lin'an (80 metres).

356 Qinwang Avenue, Lin'an

(571) 6373 1888 Rate: 480 yuan (Standard)

Mt Tianmushan

It is well-known for its tall trees and a variety of natural resources.

West Tianmu Township, Lin'an (90km away from Hangzhou centre)

Take bus No. K598 at Hangzhou West Terminus to Lin'an, then change bus or taxi.

08:00 ~ 17:00

70 yuan + 20 yuan (transport fees at scenic area)

Mausoleum of Qianwang, great canyon, source of Taihu Lake, Mt Damingshan, Qingshanhu Lake, etc.

Grouper, dried bean-curd, dried asparagus, walnuts, "chicken-blood" reddish rock, etc.

Chun'an County (Thousand-Island Lake)

The Xin'anjiang Reservoir, also known as the Lake of a Thousand Islands, came into being with the completion of the Xin'anjiang Hydroelectric Power Station in southwestern Chunan County in 1959. The lake covers an area of 575 sq km and is studded with a total of 1,078 islands of varying sizes.

tation (to Thousand-Island Lake) Taking public bus at Hangzhou East Terminus.

ke area Travelling on ships in the pier of Thousand-Island Lake.

Admission: 120 yuan; Ship fare: 30 yuan

07:00 ~ 17:00

The ticket can still be valid for the following day provided you register on the day before. You also need to present your identity card for registration.

Kaiyuan Tourist Resort, Thousand-Island Lake (5-star)

Hawaiian characteristic, fully surrounded by Lake with spectacular nature views

Qilin Peninsular, Qiandaohu Town, Chun'an, Hangzhou

(571) 6501 8888 Rate: 756 yuan (Deluxe Twin)

ot: Fish-netting

One of the best nature tourist attractions. It can only be viewed by presidents or premiers in the past, but it is open to public now.

68 yuan

(571) 6482 5858 (please check the fish-netting dates before visiting)

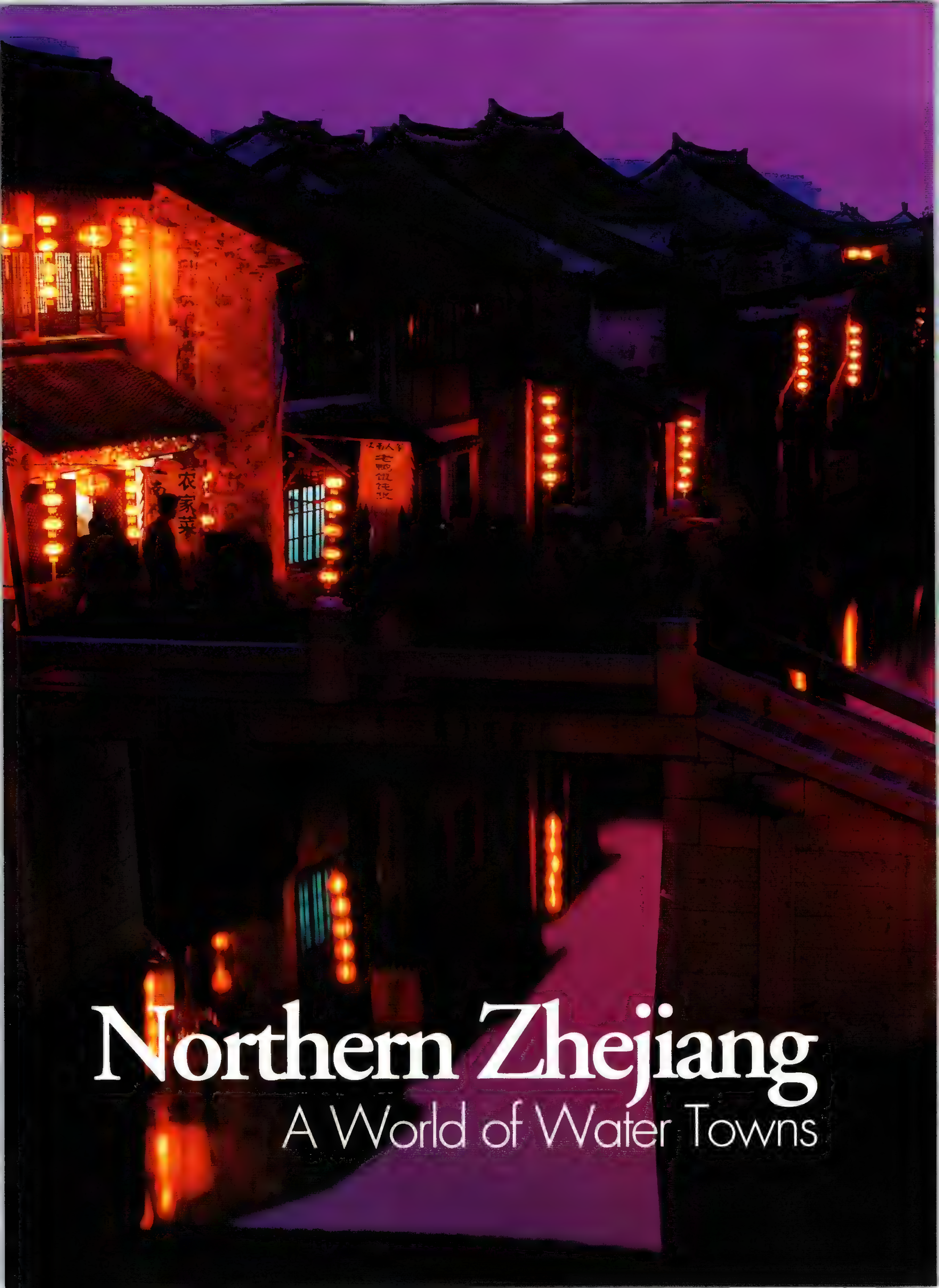
Jin Shan Wan (Golden Mountain Bay, or Red Leaves Bay)

In autumn, all leaves will turn to golden in colour, so it is called Golden Mountain Bay.

Grilled fish head, Thousand-Island leaves, dried fish

Spring blossom of Thousand-Island Lake (by Hu Changsheng)

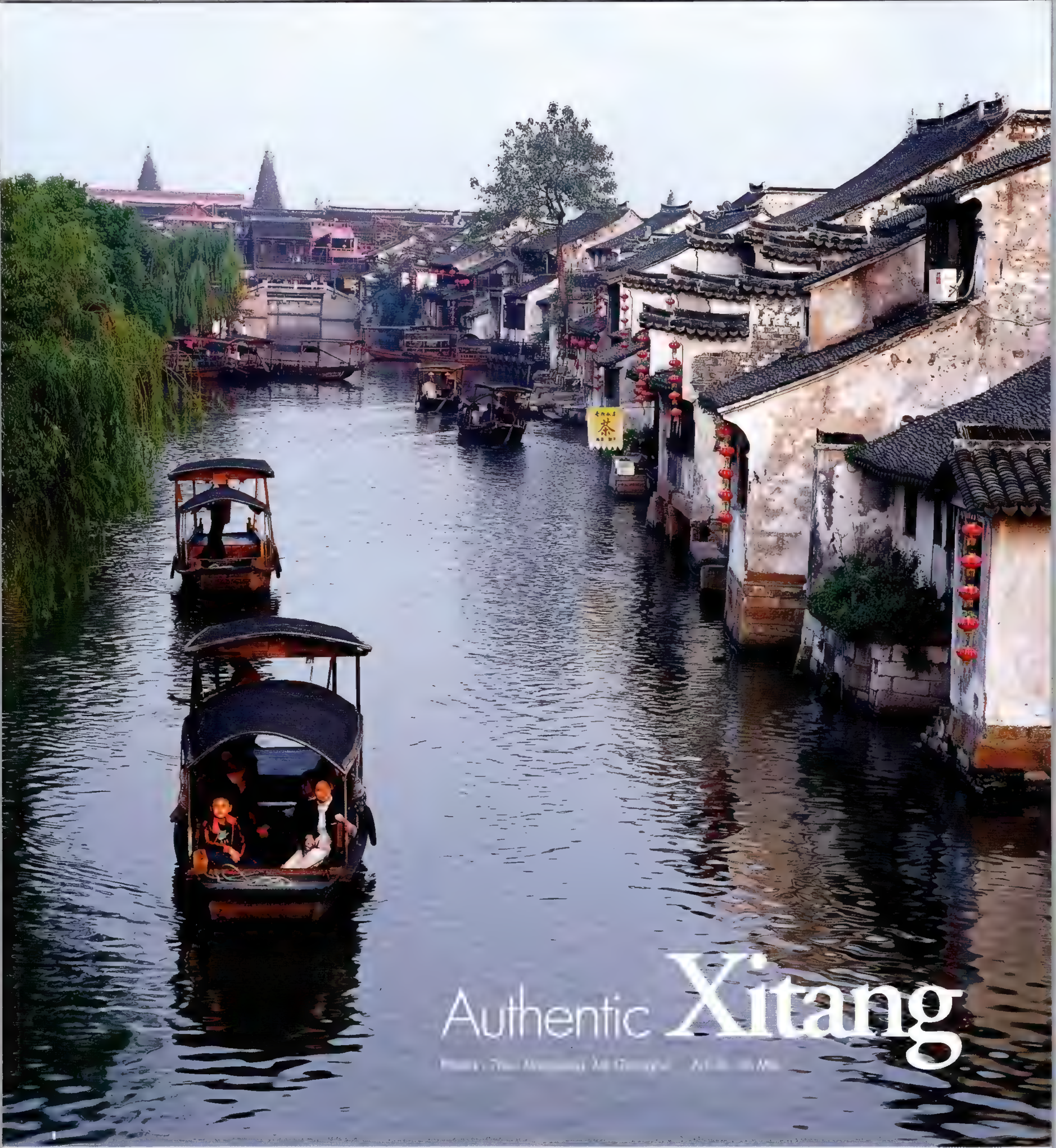
Bird eye's view of Thousand-Island Lake (by Hu Changsheng)



Northern Zhejiang

A World of Water Towns

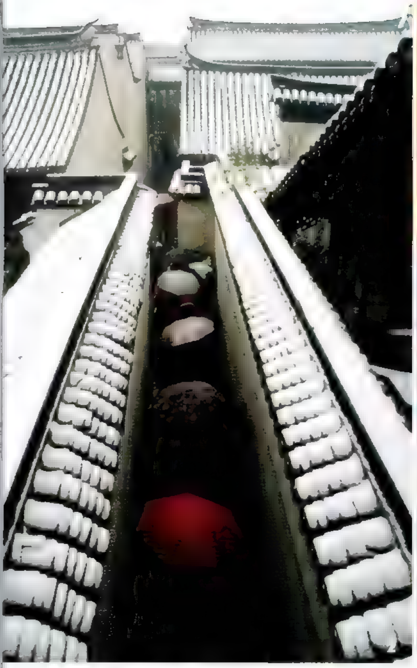
Secluded and charming view of the riverbank of Xitang in the evening (by Xie Guanghui)



Authentic Xitang

[illegible]

Run-off from Taihu Lake, situated in the wider watery web of the Yangtze River Delta in East China, nurtures many an ancient town. At first glance these settlements all seem very similar in size or style, but close examination and careful comparison reveal sharp cultural differences. The ancient town of Xitang in northern Zhejiang Province follows its own cultural orbit at an unconcerned pace, with a present encircled by the past.



1. A sightseeing boat in ancient Xitang south of the Yangtze River is one of the best ways to explore the water-based town (by Xie Guanghui)

2. Hundreds of alleys run through Xitang connecting thousands of households (by Zhou Xiangyang)

3. Art students are drawn to Xitang's exquisite scenery (by Xie Guanghui)

Under the administration of Jiashan County, Zhejiang Province, adjacent to Wujiang in Jiangsu Province to the north and Jinshan and Qingpu of Shanghai to the east, Xitang is a watery country town. During the last century, the waterways were the main means of transport, with steamboats commuting daily to Shanghai, Suzhou and Hangzhou. For centuries, nearly everyone worked in agriculture, practically the town's sole industry. Intellectuals, small businessmen, craftspeople and all the other residents shared the same peaceful lifestyle. At the end of the day, the men would sit at the dinner table sipping tea, while the women, who had been spent the day looking after the children and performing their daily chores, would enjoy a moment of unhurried quiet, knitting by the glow of an oil lamp.

Abacus of the Scholar-Businessmen

Xitang has existed for more than a millennium, but it is traces of life some 300 years ago, when it sat at the centre of the Qing Dynasty (1644—1911), that are most apparent today. At that time, an influx of shrewd Anhui businessmen spread to every town, small and large, in Zhejiang Province and the adjacent Jiangsu to the north. Today, many of Xitang's residents are descendents of those commercial pioneers who lived by scholar-businessman precepts, hard-working but mindful of cultural concerns. Hundreds of years earlier, the men of Xitang had been educated for the sole purpose of sitting for the imperial exams, hoping to become officials serving the emperor, but only a lucky few succeeded. The rest turned their hands to lowly commerce. As a result, Xitang thrived as a bustling business hub with a convenient transportation network. Instilled with the Confucian ethics of benevolence and justice, the scholars-turned-businessmen formed a slim layer of society, the efforts of which evolved into the essence of the present "ancient town". Visitors to Xitang will marvel at the sprawling arcade that winds alongside the river for more than 1,000 metres. Providing a snug shelter for shoppers and other pedestrians, it speaks of the social conscience of business owners from hundreds of years ago. A physical example of the scholar-businessman culture, it remains the town's most beautiful man-made feature. While the abacus clacked under the bookkeepers' nimble fingertips, the scholar-businessmen were busy studying human nature as a way to enhance their own futures.

Simple Yet Practical Homes

Today Xitang boasts the latest information systems and convenient transport networks. The commercial metropolises of Shanghai, Hangzhou and Suzhou are all within an hour's drive of the city. But even as the town's fortunes rise and larger, more modern buildings spring up, its local traditional housing remains unchanged.

Covering some 250,000 square metres, most of the town's dwellings from the Ming (1368—1644) and Qing dynasties and the Republic period (1912—1949), as well as its folk-crafted buildings, have been perfectly preserved. Thus, Xitang is a window into the history of China's civilian culture. While few truly wealthy families lived here, the percentage of well-off families was high. A review of genealogical records finds they had to be hard-working and thrifty in order to maintain their lifestyles. Architecturally, the houses are simple and practical.

Xitang's private homes are unlike those of other

towns throughout Jiangnan. Most homes, even the more sizable ones, are characterized by "low-profile" main entrances, with distinctly unremarkable exteriors. Inside, however, it's a different world. Another typical feature is the long vertical axis running through the house. All of the houses sit perpendicular to the river, occupying a narrow slot with the street at the front and the riverbank further off. As a result, the layout is narrow but deep, with the structure divided into three, five or as many as seven sections. Each section has a courtyard or Yi Men, a gate that is opened on ceremonial occasions only. The spatial proportions are well balanced for the comfort and convenience of the inhabitants.

South Society and West Garden

At the end of the Qing Dynasty, literary societies such as the Nan She (South Society) appeared in Xitang. In its prime, the Nan She had nearly 2,000 members of widely varied backgrounds, most of whom later became important figures in the Kuomingtang Party.

The formerly private West Garden remains one of Xitang's top tourist stops. Its east and west gardens are connected by two arcades, beneath which runs a passageway called Sujianong, or Su's Alley. The east garden features rockeries, ponds and hill steps, while the west garden is famed for its Yanlu (literally "extended greenery") Thatch and Tingtao ("wave-listening") Hall. A copper statue of Liu Yazhi stands in the garden, and the place where the Nan She members gathered has been preserved. An exhibition hall has also been established in the third section of the garden, with displays on the lives, activities and manuscripts of the society's members.

Seventeen Xitang scholar-businessmen belonged to the South Society, leaving behind a substantial amount of poetry and other literary works. Their writings are a record of the times — the macro environment of China and the town, as well as the aspirations, helplessness and spiritual conflicts of the writers themselves. During perhaps the worst years of unrest, the residents of the surrounding towns of Jiashan, Jiaxing and even Hangzhou who joined this literary fortress were outnumbered by those from Xitang. Remarkably for such a small town, a considerable proportion of the population of just over 5,000 were intellectually zealous members of the society, attending gatherings and publishing periodicals. Their activities earned such a high profile that, in a way, they constitute one of the strangest phenomena in contemporary Chinese history.

Temptations of Folk Culture

At the Seventh Arts Festival of China in 2004, the musical *Wu Guniang* (Fifth Girl), based on a song of the same name from the local folk song genre of Tiange, or field songs, was awarded the grand prize by the Ministry of Culture. It was the second time Zhejiang Province had received such a high-level honour. It is not widely known that *Wu Guniang* was

1. The 1,300-metre long “Misty Rain Corridor” provides shelter from sun and rain. By Chinese architectural standards, it is both elegant and unique (by Zhou Xiangyang)

2. The town’s private residences, with their white walls and black tile roofs typical of the architectural style found in Jiangnan area, have accompanied Xitang through the ups and downs of the past 600 years (by Zhou Xiangyang)

based on a true story that occurred in Tangdong Village, Hongxi, in the suburbs of Xitang at the end of the Qing Dynasty.

Tian Ge (Field Songs), which has been around for a few hundred years, has its roots in the region south of the Yangtze River and is especially popular in the rural areas of Jiangsu, Zhejiang and Shanghai. Every year, scores of foreign musicians and scholars come to Xitang to learn *Tian Ge*, said to be the most beautiful and the most literarily attractive folk song genre of the Han ethnic group.

Work and love are two of *Tian Ge’s* major themes. The farming culture nourished not only Xitang but also the local arts, and its influence still permeates the town. Local cultural activities, which have attracted participants from past Tian Ge festivals, often complement the more literary performances. Stay in Xitang through Chinese New Year to become completely immersed in folk dance and field songs, while drinking large bowls of rice wine to the full with the locals. Xitang has so much going for it — the local cuisine is delicious and inexpensive, the girls are pretty, and the people simple and friendly — that it can be difficult to leave.

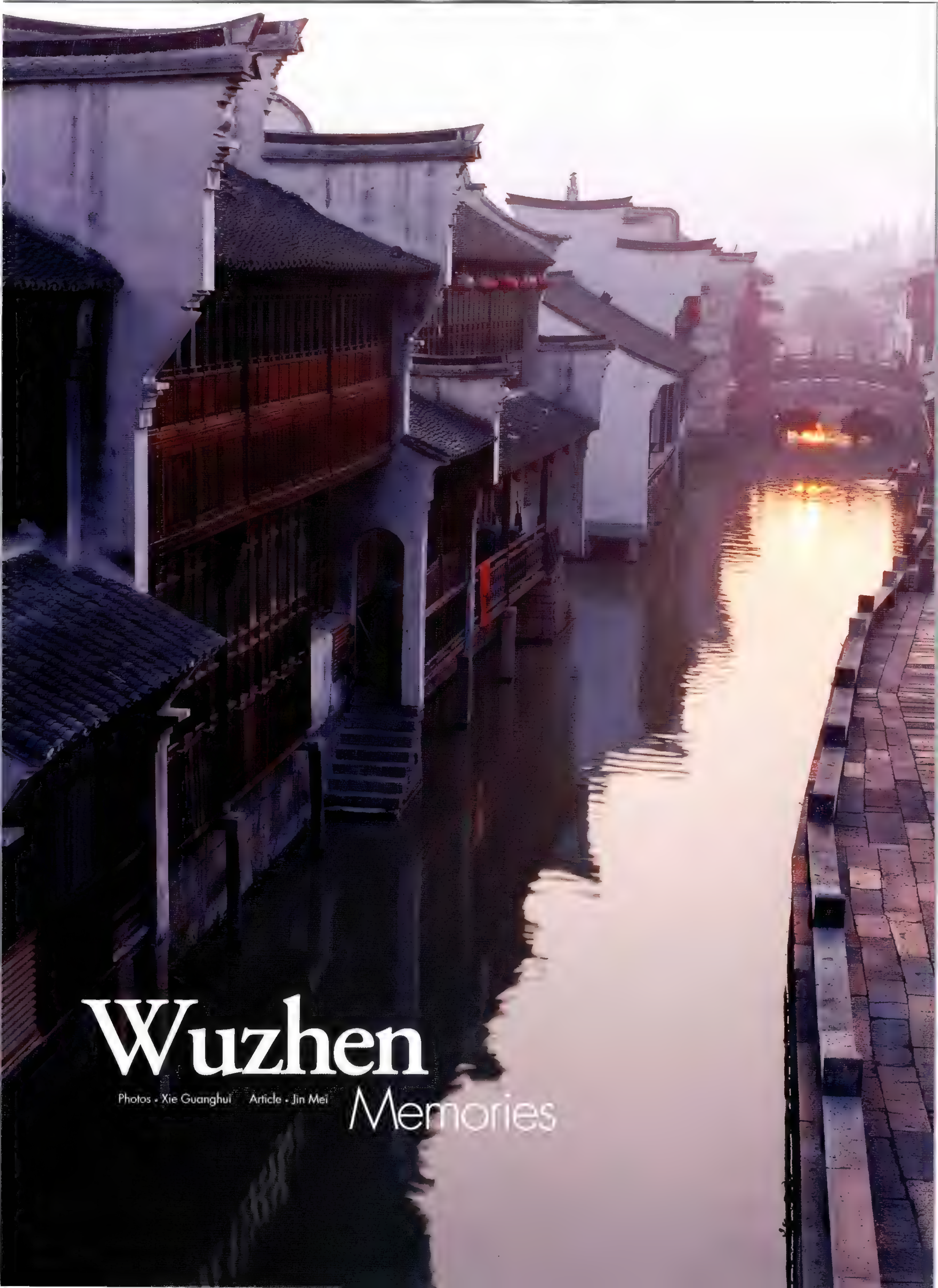
Faith and Spirituality

For some, religious faith and spirituality are one in the same. But in Xitang, this is not the case. Buddhism is practised with a view to the next life and a focus on reincarnation and karma. The people of Xitang, however, are equally interested in this life and the reality of the here and now. It is a typical civilian culture. In that regard, the spirituality of the people is achieved not through religion but through the individual.

Customs that have survived the ages stand side by side with the complexities of modern life - the benefits of this seeming paradox can be seen and felt in a wider context in today’s Xitang. This ancient town immersed in 21st century ‘progress” surely has stimulating and even revelatory messages to convey to us - and yet all is unsaid, waiting for us to decipher it.

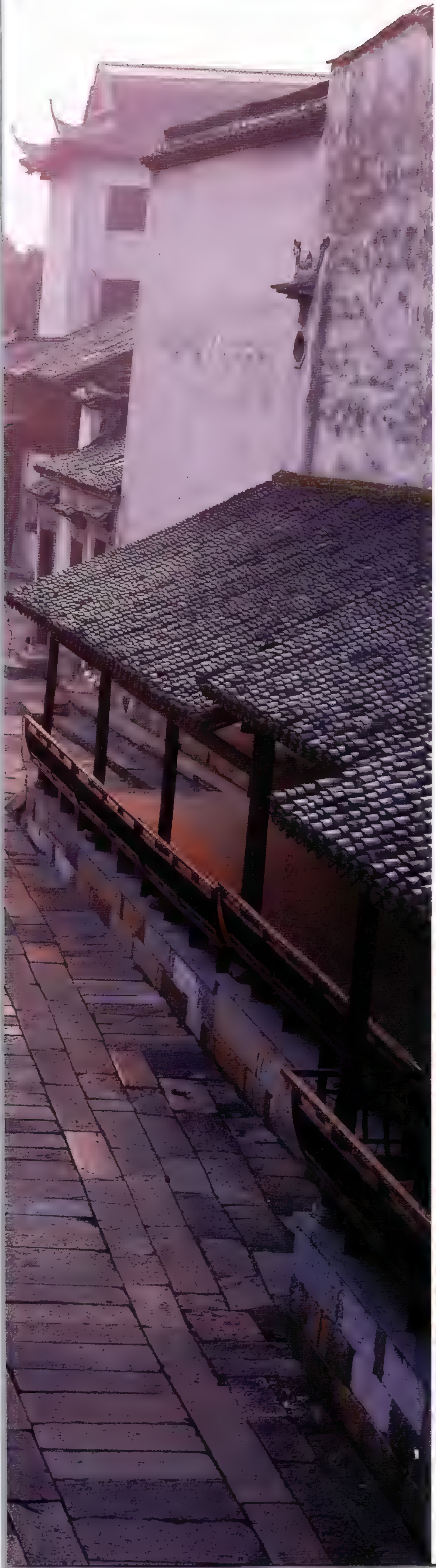
Imagine a visit to Xitang. On a rainy day, in spring, summer, autumn or winter, you stop for a few days’ escape from the rush of daily life. Having folded your umbrella, you rest on a covered bridge, the stones dripping wet, and look around at an idyllic world that conjures thoughts of “antiquity’, “harmony”, “peace”, “grace’ and “the unity of man and nature”. Then the past comes into focus, at a time when an increasing number of people seem to value a “never look back’ attitude. Or you may crouch under the roof of a small boat, gently rocked by the water making plans and decisions for the days to come. In such an atmosphere, thinking and meditating may reshape you, or deepen the understanding you already possess.

As to what you may gain from a trip to Xitang, let that be a worthy clue.



Wuzhen Memories

Photos · Xie Guanghui　Article · Jin Mei



As seen on a map of China, the ancient Grand Canal in China resembles a huge, upside-down dragon, its head extending to Hangzhou Bay. At the canal's Zhejiang section where the dragon's head twists around, two small towns — Wuzhen and Qingzhen — were once connected by a large bridge.

Present-day Wuzhen, which takes in the former Qingzhen, is famous for sericulture, or silk production.

The origin of the name Wuzhen, which is located in the administration of Tongxiang City in Zhejiang Province, is unclear. One theory points to the private homes' blue bricks and glazed tiles: the colour blue-grey is called *wu* locally and *zhen* literally means "town". Another explanation is that Wu, a local general from the Tang Dynasty (618—907), died here fighting with rebels. A lofty gingko tree stands over General Wu's alleged grave as a symbol of his unyielding character. Or perhaps the town's name is a mix of the two.

Silkworm Songs and Serious Students

Just as the ancient canal has flowed quietly past the town for centuries, the endless mulberry fields stretching out on either side of it have provided a livelihood for generations of silk growers.

For years, young women have sung the same *can*

1. Situated in a web of waterways and ponds, the ancient town of Wuzhen has a 1,200-year history

2. The streets of Wuzhen follow the river, forming parallel waterways and overland paths. The private residences all face the streets with the water behind them

高公生糟坊
Gao Gongsheng Distillery

1

ge (silkworm songs) while carrying their loads of ready-made silks. Thus, many say that the songs sung by these women are the soul of the *can chuan* (silkworm collecting boats), and the boats are the soul of the waters of Wuzhen. Though it is generally agreed that the Silk Road started in Chang'an, today's Xi'an, I feel the road really began at Wuzhen amid the silkworm songs. Silkworm songs are performed during the Gacanhua Festival, along with rituals to ensure that the silkworms continue to produce, while young men and women engage in their own courtship rites. The songs, which have been passed down for centuries, are also chanted when the silkworm cocoons are collected.

Chun Can (Spring Silkworm) by Mao Dun (1896—1981), a famous Chinese writer, depicts the hardships faced by the Chinese silk growers. Today Wuzhen keeps the memory of *Chun Can* alive by hosting the Mao Dun Literary Prize ceremony every four years.

Before travelling to Wuzhen, it helps to know the town's history and culture, because its intellectual background is key to its social temperament, so typical of towns in Jiangnan area.

In the Liang Dynasty, during the period of Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms (902—979), Prince Zhaoming went to Wuzhen to study books of the highest learning. He felt detached from worldly life, believing that only the reading and absorbing of wisdom could bring about real happiness. But why did a noble of such lofty social status choose Wuzhen? History and geographical situation had a lot to do with it. In the period of the Wu and Yue kingdoms during the Three Kingdoms period (220—280), Wuzhen stood between the two rivals but fell outside the administration of either. In subsequent dynasties, its administration constantly shifted. As a result, it enjoyed little actual governance, making it the best place for the reclusive life of the dedicated student. The prince also treasured the graceful bridges and rivers of Jiangnan. At one's leisure after long hours of study, a stroll along the field trails, surrounded by girlish voices raised in silkworm songs, must have been lovely. What a pleasure it would be to stand at the edge of the woods by the bank of the canal at dusk in summer, a bowl of wine in hand, or sleep off the effects of such revelry on a flat stone.

Wuzhen's fostering of upwardly mobile students became a tradition. Over the dynasties countless Wuzhen students were honoured for being among the top scorers on the imperial exams. The Lizhi Academy still stands in Wuzhen, with sections of well-lit classrooms. The worn brick paths are testament to the many scholars who shuffled over them deep in thought. From the Song to the Qing dynasties, a total of 161 *Juren* (successful candidates in the imperial examinations at the provincial level) came from this small town.

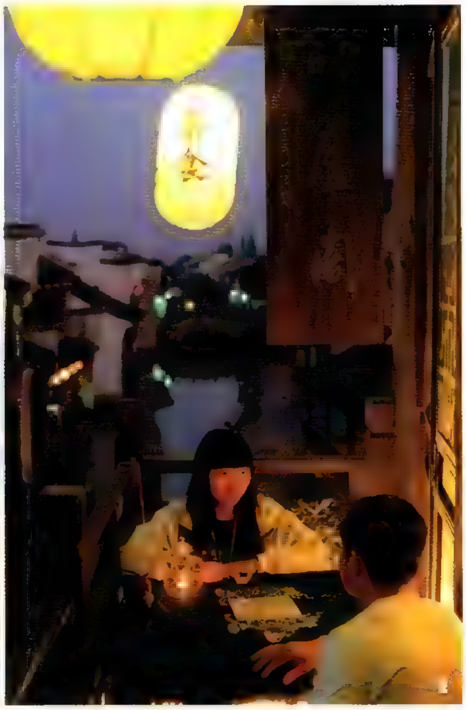
In the past, studying to become an official was seen as a worthy pursuit, and the educated sought top positions through different levels of the imperial exams. In the hope of cultivating more successful exam candidates, every county seat had a Wenchang Hall. *Wenchang* was a general term for the six stars believed to influence study and wisdom. Though a small town and not a county seat, Wuzhen had an impressive Wenchang Hall, proof that past residents were dedicated to improving themselves intellectually.

Primitive Indigo Cotton Print Cloth

In the Chinese mentality, the colour blue (*lan*) is equivalent to indigo (*ding*), a shade between blue and purple. Wuzhen does not produce porcelain, but indigo cotton print cloth has a similar cultural significance. Wuzhen's indigo cotton print cloth workshops were once world famous. The traditional procedure by which it's been made for hundreds of years can still be seen here, from designing, stencilling and stencil painting to patterning, dyeing and drying.

1. Along with the footbridges, waterways and houses, the well-preserved streets best reflect the town's antiquity

2. Most homes have small doorways and narrow staircases, so furniture for the upper floors must be passed from the ground through a second-storey window



1. The Hongyuantai Dyeing Workshop has been making indigo cotton print cloth for years. Tourists can watch the process

2. Fangluge Tea House, named to honour the visit of Lu Yu, a "Tea Saint" of China, is now an essential tourist stop

I asked several dyers why the blue and white material was so prevalent here. The blue dye comes from the indigo plant, which is also commonly used in Chinese medicine. Indigo is hearty and grows all over Jiangnan area. Wuzhen's fabric designs feature a wide variety of shapes and forms, as well as details that originated naturally from the working procedure. It seems incredible that craftsmen at the very base of a society worked with such a rich degree of creativity and artistic expression.

Waterside Pavilions — A Sentimental Feeling

Waterside pavilions are found throughout China's ancient architectural catalogue. The large, elegant structures regularly grace royal palaces or the homes of wealthy families. As a water town, Wuzhen has many such pavilions built along the Dongshi River. Their wooden supports reach down deep into the water, in much the same way that mountainside "Diao Jiao Lou", or suspended buildings, are held up on their stilts. The simple, even crude wooden pavilions, which seem to float just a metre above the water's surface, are lined up side by side all along the river. Simple though they seem, to enter one is to be transported back in time.

For the residents of Wuzhen, every aspect of life is tied to the canals — bridges, banks, boats and so on. Yet the charm of living in a waterside pavilion never seems to wear off. Literally sleeping over the gentle waves, you doze off to a lullaby of lapping water, an experience available only in Wuzhen.

For a closer look at the waterside pavilions, take a boat from Shuangqiao on the Dongshi River. Passing beneath the Renyi, Renshou, Xinghua and Yingjia bridges, you can inspect the skills of the ancient stone masons and marvel at their ability to fuse art, wisdom and practicality.

Taoist Temple and Opera Appreciation

Like Suzhou, Wuzhen has a Guanqian Street that runs in front of a Taoist temple. Suzhou is home to the Xuanmiao Taoist Temple, while Wuzhen has the Xiuzhen Taoist Temple, but both are synonymous with fun times. An old performance space, originally known as the Xiuzhenguan Opera Stage, stands on Wuzhen's Guanqian Street. As the stage used to be at the front gate of the Taoist temple, it adopted the temple's name. The stage now stands opposite the temple's current main gate with a public square before it. In the past, operas would be staged on the fifth day of the first month of the Chinese calendar for the Five Fortune Gods Festival, on the 28th day of the third month for the Dongyue (East Sacred Mountain) Temple Fair, on the 15th day of the fifth month for the Reception Fair of General Plague, and on the 15th and 16th days of the seventh month for the City God Temple Fair. The operas were all concerned with how to please the gods, but down on the square below the stage the audience shared the pleasure of their gods. Today, tourists can watch operas performed by folk troupes.

A trip to Wuzhen requires some knowledge of its history and culture to be truly understood and appreciated, for the way of life and enduring folk customs of the watertowns in the Jiangnan area endure here.

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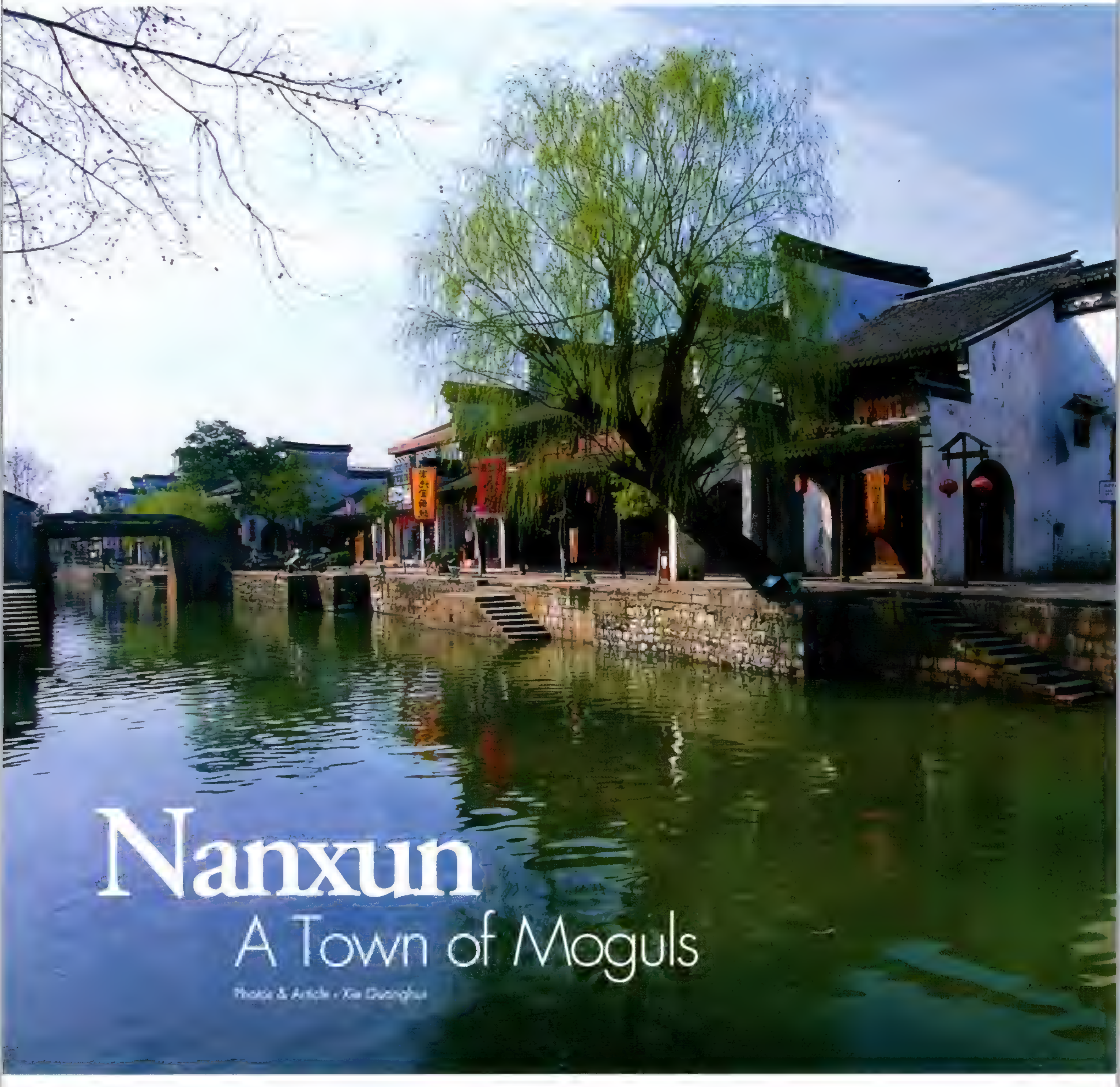


Nanxun

A Town of Moguls

Photo & Article · Xie Guanghui

Nanxun is a small Jiangnan water town where a number of billionaires once lived. They were so rich that their accumulated wealth was greater than a year's worth of the national revenue of the Qing Dynasty. How did this little hamlet produce so many billionaires? How does it differ from other small towns?

1. Nanxun grew rich from the silk business at the beginning of the Republic of China period

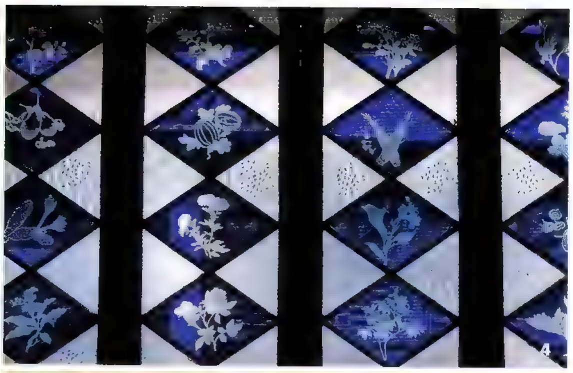
2. Jia Ye Tang is now a branch of the Zhejiang Library, with 130,000 books and 200,000 printing plates in its collection

On a summer evening in 1925, Zhang Shiming, a rich Nanxun businessman was kidnapped in Shanghai and held for a ransom of 500,000 taels (one tael equals about 38 grams) of silver, an astronomic figure at the time. However, the kidnappers knew that Zhang's family could afford it, as he owned property worth 12 million taels of silver, making him the third richest man in Shanghai. A police investigation concluded that Shanghai gang leader Huang Jinrong had masterminded the crime.

A Town as Rich as a Country

Still, the Zhangs were only the second richest family in Nanxun. At the beginning of the Republic of China period (1912—1949), a popular saying ranked Nanxun's wealthy residents into the different grades of four "elephants", eight "bulls" and 72 "golden dogs". "Elephant" referred to the richest, with the "bull" and the "dog" owning fewer, though still substantial, assets. Liu Yong, the wealthiest of Nanxun's four "elephants", started off running a silk manufacturing business. Later, his empire spread to Shanghai where he branched out into the salt, real estate and pawnbroking industries as well, bringing his wealth to 20 million taels of silver. It's no exaggeration to say Nanxun was as rich as a country.

Nanxun is located in east Huzhou, south of Taihu Lake. In the 16th century, the residents of nearby Qili Village made pioneering improvements to silk quality and the filature technique, or the process by which silk is withdrawn from the cocoon. As a result, the demand for silk grew rapidly. Silk growers in surrounding villages followed suit and the silk produced near Taihu Lake became known as "Qili Silk". In 1842 when five main Chinese ports (Guangzhou, Xiamen, Ningbo, Shanghai and Fuzhou) were forced to open to foreign trade under the Treaty of Nanjing (or Nanking), business boomed as Qili silk became a key export commodity. The number of capitalists who profited from the raw silk business, as well as merchants who could speak English and understand western cultures, grew in Nanxun. They became the first buyers for foreign firms in Shanghai that sold goods to expatriates.



A Mansion Costlier than a Warship

The newly wealthy businessmen lavished their money on gardens, Xiao Lian Zhuang (Lesser Lotus Villa) being the most famous of these. From 1885 to 1924, three generations of Liu's — headed by Liu Yong, Liu Jinzao and Liu Chenggan, respectively — worked on the garden, which ultimately cost one million taels of silver. When Liu Yong started Xiao Lian Zhuang, the late Qing minister Li Hongzhang (1823—1901) was setting up China's navy on Liugong Island. At that time, the price of an armoured warship from Germany was 100 taels of silver. Dingyuan, the navy's flagship, cost 1.7 million taels to build. The rich businessmen could have easily built a fleet themselves.

Sitting on 72 *mu* (12 acres), Xiao Lian Zhuang encloses a huge lotus pond complete with pavilions and terraces. In early summer, the pond is a sea of fragrant lotus flowers.

The Jia Ye Tang Library, which stands across the river from Xiao Lian Zhuang, was funded and built by Liu Chenggan, the eldest grandson of Liu Yong, in 1924. The library's two-storey main building fuses both Chinese and Western architectural style. The cast-iron railings of the upper and the lower arcades encircle heavy-looking *zhuang zi* (a Chinese characters usually used on seals) in the patio. The camphor book cabinets in the study remain, while the rosewood furniture and tilted tablets impart an ancient sensibility. The lamps were imported from the West, indicating that the host kept up with the fashion of the times. In its prime, the Jia Ye Tang Library's book collection numbered 600,000 and included some valuable Ming-era block-printed editions, transcripts and manuscripts. Even more precious, perhaps, were the books banned in the Qing Dynasty. In 1933, as

1. Zhang Shiming's former residence combines both Chinese and Western architectural styles

2. The unsophisticated yet elegant archways of the Xiao Lian Zhuang recede into the shade of trees. A French influence is evident throughout the garden

3. The site of the Silk Association was a raw silk dealer's shop a century ago. High quality Qili Silk was shipped from here to Beijing and coastal commercial ports, where it was sent on to Europe and America

4. These blue and white window panes with their delicate floral engravings were brought from France 100 years ago

5. When polished, these colourful imported French floor tiles are smooth enough for dancers to glide on

the silk industry dwindled and the country was plagued by non-stop warfare, the Lius' prosperity declined. The rare books were gradually lost. In 1949, the more than 1,000 *mu* (167 acres) on which rent had been collected to fund the library was reclaimed by the State. Two years later, with the library's economic resources depleted, Liu Chenggan presented its collection to the Zhejiang Library. Today, Jia Ye Tang still exhibits best editions impressed by engraved printing blocks, as well as by photocopy, which convey the quiet beauty unique to well-made books.

European Touches within Chinese Walls

Liushi Tihao, dubbed the Red House, was the home of Liu Tiqing, third son of Liu Yong. As you come ashore onto the pier at the front of the house and enter the main gate, you notice the characters over the window frames. Their ancient, elegant style and detail speak of exquisite taste and luxury. Through the passageway, the serious grey of the walls is replaced by bright red. A European architecture sitting in the shade of some trees was built with materials imported from abroad. The charm of most Jiangnan towns usually lies in their bridges and waterways, as well as their white walls and green tiled roofs. Here, the Western structures within the tall gabled walls make Nanxun extra-special.

Oppposite Liushi Tihao across the Nanshi River stands the much larger Yide (Admirable Virtue) Hall, Zhang Shiming's residence. The mansion, known as the "No. 1 House in Jiangnan area", looks more like a high-class country club than a home. Inside the main gate is a spacious area where wealthy guests used to "park" their sedan chairs in the past. Then you enter Yide Hall itself; here, the host held many grand events. Each window and door of the wing halls feature ornate floral carvings depicting the *Romance of the West Chamber*, a touching love story from the Yuan Dynasty (1271—1368). An old German clock hanging on the wall still keeps precise time. The third section is Bajiao Hall, where the Zhangs dined. The second-floor window frames on either side of the patio depict seasonal flora engraved on the glass in a blue diamond grid pattern, yet another marriage of Chinese and Western elegance.

A Tael of Gold for a Pane of Glass

Ten years ago, two foreigners visiting Nanxun became excited about the engraved blue glass panes. One of them said they must have been a product of France, while the other thought they were Czech. They took pictures and went back to Europe to check. The glass was found to have been made by the Daum Brothers of France. Today, Zhang Shiming's former home is a protected cultural site. Several years ago a few of the panes were broken. Replacements were ordered from Shanghai, but they failed to match the deep colour and richness of the engravings. Every pane of the original glass was said to have cost one to two taels of gold when it was first purchased.

The fourth section of Yide Hall is a spectacular Western building with an elegant ballroom. The red bricks of the outer walls were shipped from Europe. While the French mosaics and the polished dance floor still gleam. One hundred years ago, the Zhangs maintained the seriousness of the times and followed the rituals as expected in this tranquil town, but at dusk another world sprang to life under the ballroom's chandeliers as waltzes and even jazz tunes enlivened in the entire house. Graceful ladies and stylish young men strode onto the dance floor in pairs, swirling and swivelling to the music.

Zhang Jingjiang, a cousin of Zhang Shiming, was more conservative with his money. In 1905 Dr Sun Yat-sen, founder of the Kuomintang that brought down the Qing Dynasty, and Zhang Jingjiang met on a sea voyage. Zhang was moved by Dr Sun's desire for change. Later, he borrowed 500,000 taels of silver from his uncle, Peng Laichen, and another 500,000 from his cousin to help fund Dr Sun's National Revolutionary Army. At the beginning of the last century, Zhang was conducting business in Europe. When he was 23, his father bought him an official title for the price of 100,000 taels of silver. Zhang Jingjiang joined a delegation of the Qing government to France as commercial counsellor. In Paris, he inspected the local market. He found that the silk, tea and porcelain were from China, but the dealers were all Japanese. So he set up the China Tongyun Company in Madeleine Square on the Champs-Elysees to deal directly with imported Chinese goods and did a roaring business.

Peaceful Small Town Life

Just west of Zhang Jingjiang's former home is Baijianlou, or "Hundred Buildings". Arcades accommodating more than 150 households run along the river for some 400 metres, stretching out in a long row of gabled walls and archways. Some of the walls are meant to resemble the shape of clouds, Guanyin (Goddess of Mercy) or triple horse heads. Steps extend gradually down to the water, in which the white walls, green glazed tiles, arcade pillars and archways are all reflected. A woman walks out of her house and down the steps to the river to do her washing. The still surface suddenly ripples to life, perfectly illustrating the Zen-like essence of Jiangnan's water towns.

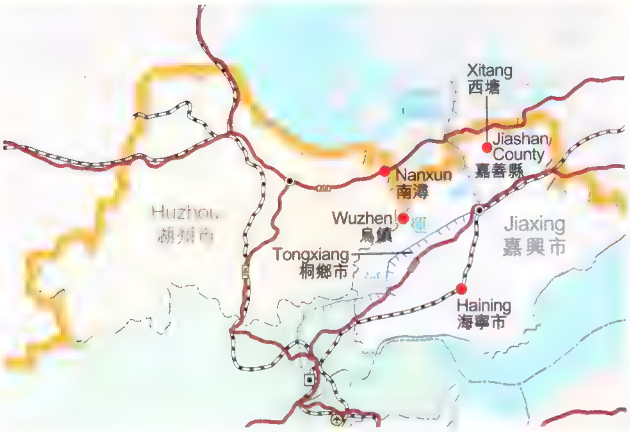
South of the Tongjin Bridge, the prosperous silk market has already been replaced by many shops selling candies, cigarettes and wine. Sidewalk stalls overflow with an attractive assortment of fruits and vegetables, the town's current local produce. A bookshop-teahouse now stands near the old Nanxun Silk Association building. The owner, in her 30s, used to be a psychiatrist. As small town life presents few mental stresses, there is little need for her professional services.

In fact, reading and sipping tea in such a tranquil place as Nanxun is the best cure, and prevention, for whatever might ail you.

Translated by Zhang Boli

1. The residents of Nanxun can wash their clothes and dock boats at any of the many sets of steps along the waterfront

2. The 150 waterside residences of Baijianlou village extend for 400 metres. A sunny day is ideal for airing cotton quilts



Xitang

Xitang has a flat landscape of crisscrossed rivers and quiet natural environment. The nine river channels converge at the town area and divide the land into nine plates. Numerous bridges weave the villages and the rivers into one piece. Places of interests include stone alleys, Xi Yuan (West Garden), the Ni's Residence, Zhang Zheng Root Carving Art Museum, Zhongfu (Accumulating Luck) Hall, State-guarding and Provisions-transporting King's Temple, Zui Yuan (Inebriety Garden), Tile and Bricks Display Hall, Yellow Wine Display Hall.

[illegible]

Bus: Hangzhou — Jiashan — Xitang: At Hangzhou East Bus Station, the bus toward Jiashan runs every 40 minutes and the travelling time is about 1.5 hours. The bus rides from Jiashan to Xitang takes about 30 minutes. The last bus from Xitang back to Jiashan departs at 18:00.

Taxi: Xitang is about 9 km from Jiashan. To get there by taxi cost about 25 yuan to 30 yuan. Usually you can still find a taxi for returning to Jiashan before 20:00. The fare is much cheaper, only about 5 yuan per person.

Xitang cruise: The boat sets out from the pier in Futang. In the daytime, only hired boat is available so the departure time depends on the request of the passengers, basically 80 yuan /12 persons. The boat departs at 18:00, 19:00 and 20:00. It coasts 10 yuan for individual passenger. Tourists can enjoy the cruise with entrance tickets of the scenic areas.

Old mansion of Chens hostel (by Xie Guanghui)

[illegible]

Chen's Old Home Hostel (Chen Jia Laozhai Kezhan)

Features: It was formerly the residence of the prominent Chens family in the Ming Dynasty. The environment is fresh and quiet. Many backpackers' favourite.

Add: 17 Chao Nan Di, Xitang

Rate: 80~100 yuan (Standard)

[illegible] Fenhu yellow wine, bazhen cake, "June red" crab, water bean curd, pumpkin cake, stinky tofu, walnut cake and steamed pork with rice noodles.

A local of Xitang making walnut cake (by Suzan So)

[illegible]

The celebrities of Wuzhen are countless. For example, the editor of China's earliest anthology of poetry Prince Liang Zhaoming, and the Xitang town history writer Shen Ping. Other well-known figures include Mao Dun (writer), Shen Zemin (political leader), Lu Xuepu (banker), etc. Places of interest include the former residence of Mao Dun, Hong Yuan Tai Dyeing Factory, Hui Yuan pawnshop, ancient opera stage, Lizhi Academy, tower on water, old lanes, ancient bridges, Caishen (God of Fortune) Bay, Jiangnan Beds Museum, Jiangnan Wood-carvings Museum, Wuzhen customs museum, Yu Liuliang Coins Gallery and Sanbaokai Brewery.

[illegible]

Bus: Take the bus to Wuzhen at the Hangzhou East Terminus. Service hours: 06:50 ~ 17:50. Frequency: every 40 ~ 60 minutes. Travelling time: Around 1 hour

Transport in town:

Pedicab: 3 yuan for first km. Then 1 yuan per 500 m

Taxi: Flagdown price 5 yuan per 4 km. Then 1.8 yuan per each km

Cruise: (Group) 80 yuan; capacity: 8 people

[illegible]

Ziye Hotel (3-star)

Features: It is named after Mao Dun's fiction Ziye (Midnight), and built in Jiangnan water town style.

Add: No. 3 Ziye Road, Wuzhen

Price: 480 ~ 868 yuan

Tel: (573) 872 8188

Museum of Wuzhen [illegible] (by Xie Guanghui)

[illegible] Gu Sao (autie) cake, San Bai (three white) wine, white water fish, roast mutton and sauced chicken.

[illegible]

Nanxun is a 1,000-year old town and it was prosperous from the Ming to mid-Qing dynasties. Qili silk produced by the merchants in the area has gained reputation both at home and overseas. Places of interest in Nanxun include Xiao Lian Zhuang villa, Jia Ye Tang library, former residence of Zhang Shiming, former residence of Zhang Jing Jiang, the Bai Jian Lou (Hundred Buildings), the silk industry association hall, Staircase Number of Family Liu, Qiushuli (Begging for Forgiveness Lane) Residence, Nanxun History Museum and three ancient stone bridges.

[illegible]

Train: At Hangzhou North Railway Station, take the train to Huzhou Railway Station. Then take a bus to the Nanxun scenic area.

Bus: At the Hangzhou North Bus Station, take the bus to Huzhou Railway Station. Then take a bus to the Nanxun scenic area.

Tongjin Bridge, the most famous bridge of Nanxun (by Xie Guanghui)

[illegible]

Ying Yuan Inn (2 star)

Features: It the most well preserved garden-turned-hotel in Nanxun. It was originally a private garden owned by a rich man called Chen Xiong.

Add: No. 31 Bianmin Road, Nanxun, Huzhou

Rate: 180 yuan (Standard), discount offered on weekdays

[illegible] Dingsheng pastry, Fengxiao (glutinous rice crust) soup, Nanxun wine, Xun Dou (smoked bean) tea, preserved vegetables, and Xiuhuajin vegetables. Special bookshop-cafe: Cha Zhi Yun (Rhythm of Tea), located at 108 Zhennandong Street, Nanxun. A simple furnished and beautiful place. A kind of tasty snack, "snow dumpling" is served there.

Travel Tips of Haining

Haining, 61.5 km from Hangzhou, has a history of 6,000 years. It has rich cultural heritage and legacy. Tide watching, the art of lanterns and the imprint of celebrities are the special cultural phenomenon of Haining.

[illegible]

Train: Everyday several trains run from Hangzhou to Jiaxing and the ride takes about 1.5 hours. It takes about another 20 minutes from Jiaxing to Haining by train. The train has high frequency.

[illegible]

Haining Longxiang Hotel (3-star)
Add: 510 Xishan Road, Haining City, Jiaxing
Tel: (573) 728 2828
Haining New World Hotel (2-star)
Add: 38 Haichang Road, Haining, Jiaxing
Tel: (573) 728 2288
Haining Xiashi Youth Hostel
Add: 648 Xinshanlu, Haining, Jiaxing
Tel: (573) 722 2298

[illegible]

1 Former residence of Jin Yong

The writer Jin Yong was born in Yuanhuazhen, the Haining city. The old house exhibits the calligraphy of the Jins, history of his family and the records about his childhood and achievements. Free admission.

Former residence of Jin Rong (by Xie Guanghui)

2 [illegible]

After his marriage with Lu Xiaoman, the poet and prose writer Xu Zhimo lived, for a short time, in this tiny residential building which integrates the Chinese and western styles. It is located in Ganhe Street, Xiashi Town. The exhibits include his life story, copies of his works and stuffs of his daily life. Opening hours: 08:00~11:00; 13:00~16:00

[illegible]

3 [illegible]

Wang Guowei (1877—1927) was a prominent scholar with international reputation. He was a historian, writer, philosopher and archaeologist. Together with Liang Qichao, Zhao Yuanren and Chen Yinke, Wang were known as the Four Great Teachers of the Tsinghua University.

Admission: 10 yuan

Former residence of Wang Guowei (by Xie Guanghui)

4 [illegible]

The park is one of the 10 Greatest Scenic Areas in the Zhejiang Province. It is situated in the Qiangchao section of the Qiantang River. The location is the best place for enjoying the view of the river. There are houses and towers for tide watching. Famous Chinese leaders like Dr Sun Yat-sen, Mao Zedong and Jiang Zemin have enjoyed tide watching on the spot.

Admission: 20 yuan

5 Poseidon's Temple [illegible]

The temple is a cultural heritage site under national protection. It is also known as "the Forbidden City of Jiangnan area". Its architectural style is decent and solemn. Besides, the rumour about the identity of the Poseidon (God of Sea) makes it a mysterious site of of the suspected usurpation by Yongzheng. Inside the temple, there are five tablets bestowed by the order of the Qing emperors: Yongzheng, Qianlong, Daoquang, Tongzhi. The monument with co-inscription by Yongzheng and Qianglong added more imperial significance to the temple.

Admission: 10 yuan

Poseidon's Temple Palace (by Xie Guanghui)

6 Yanquan Ancient Cit[illegible]

The ancient city was built 2,200 years ago during the Western Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-24). It is a combination of the glamour of natural beauty and the progress of human culture. The marvelous tidal wave, legends of Qing Emperor Qianlong's birth and the mystery of the "Jiangnan Forbidden City" have turned it into a popular tourist spot.

7 [illegible]

This architecture of this mansion is an archetype of luxurious homes of the rich in Jiangnan during the Qing Dynasty. Inside the house, one can see the calligraphy of the Ming Dynasty and the couplet bestowed by the Qing Emperor Yongzheng.

Chen Gelao's Residence (by Xie Guanghui)

8 [illegible]

Legend has it that theplace was originally a brothel set up by the Song prostitute Li Shishi. The building had been repeatedly pulled down and rebuilt but the glamour never ceased. Huaju Yashe is now a museum for recapturing the Qing Lou (brothel) culture in Chinese history.

9 Museun [illegible]

It presents puppet shadow shows which are part of the local customs.

10 Museum of Famous Tablets and Couplets in Jiangnan

The museum was formerly the residence of an official of the military ministry of the Qing Dynasty. It houses a collection of tablets and couplets of the Jiangnan area. The museum is opposite the Old Mansion of the Chens on the other side of the river.

11 [illegible]

Originally an official altar, it was renamed Wutu (Five Gods of the Land) Temple. The main hall of the Taoist temple was for the worship of the five gods from the East, West, South, and North, and the middle.

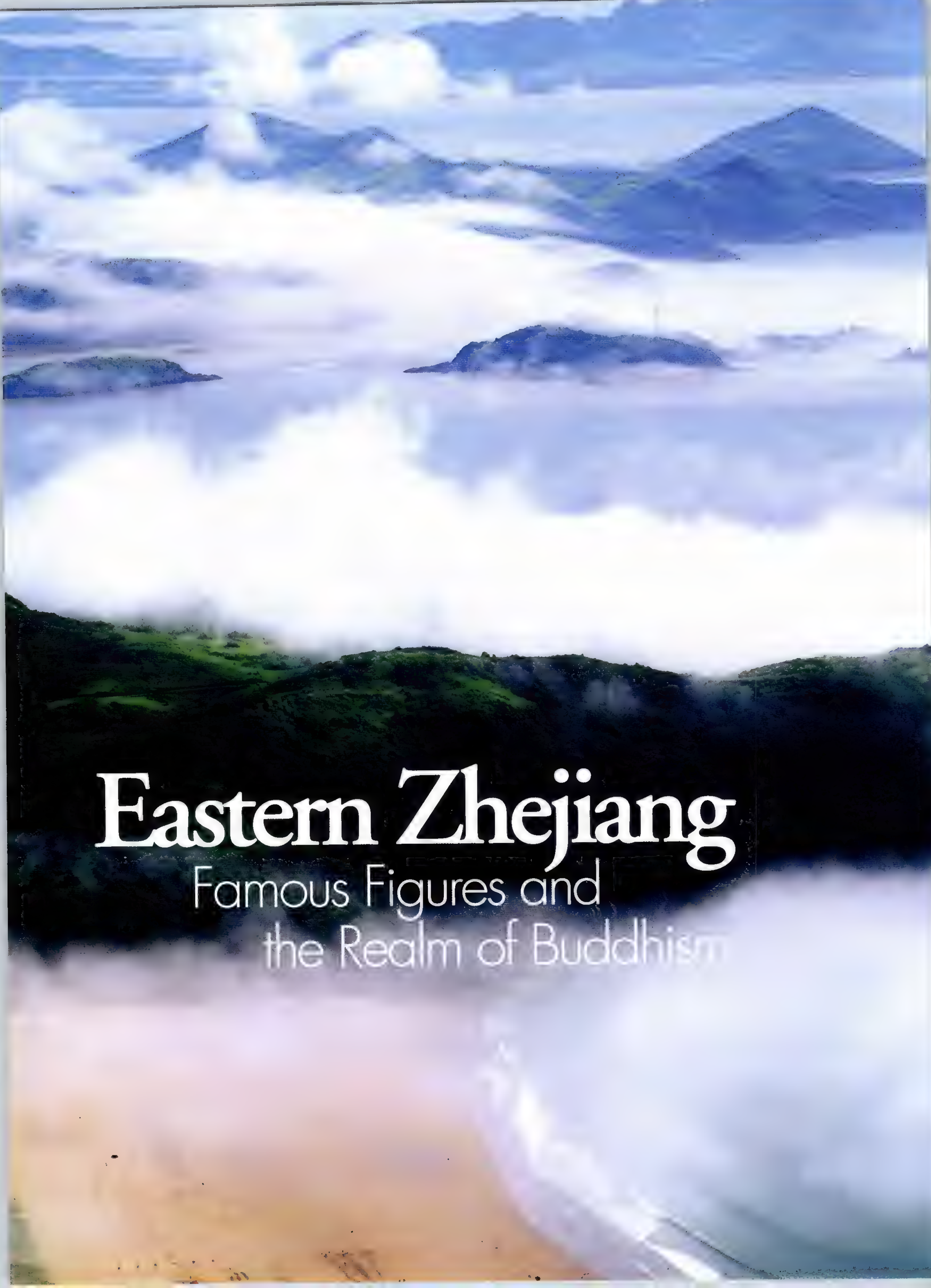
12 Chenghuang Temp[illegible]

It was first built in 1023 during the Song Dynasty and renovation took place in the successive dynasties. The main hall was for worshiping Chenghuang, the deity of guarding a town. The building also has a religious opera stage of the Ming style. It is the only Chenghuang temple left in northern Zhejiang.

[illegible] cenic Zone Package Ticket: 70 yuan (include scenic spots of above No. 6~12)
Opening hours: 08:00 ~ 16:30

Other attractions: Haining Chinese Leather City, ancient street of former minister residence, Yulin Shitang (an ancient anti-flood pond), Guanyixiaochao (a place for tide watching), Xishan Park (the tomb of Xu Zhimo), Qianjuntao Art Museum and Hainaing Museum

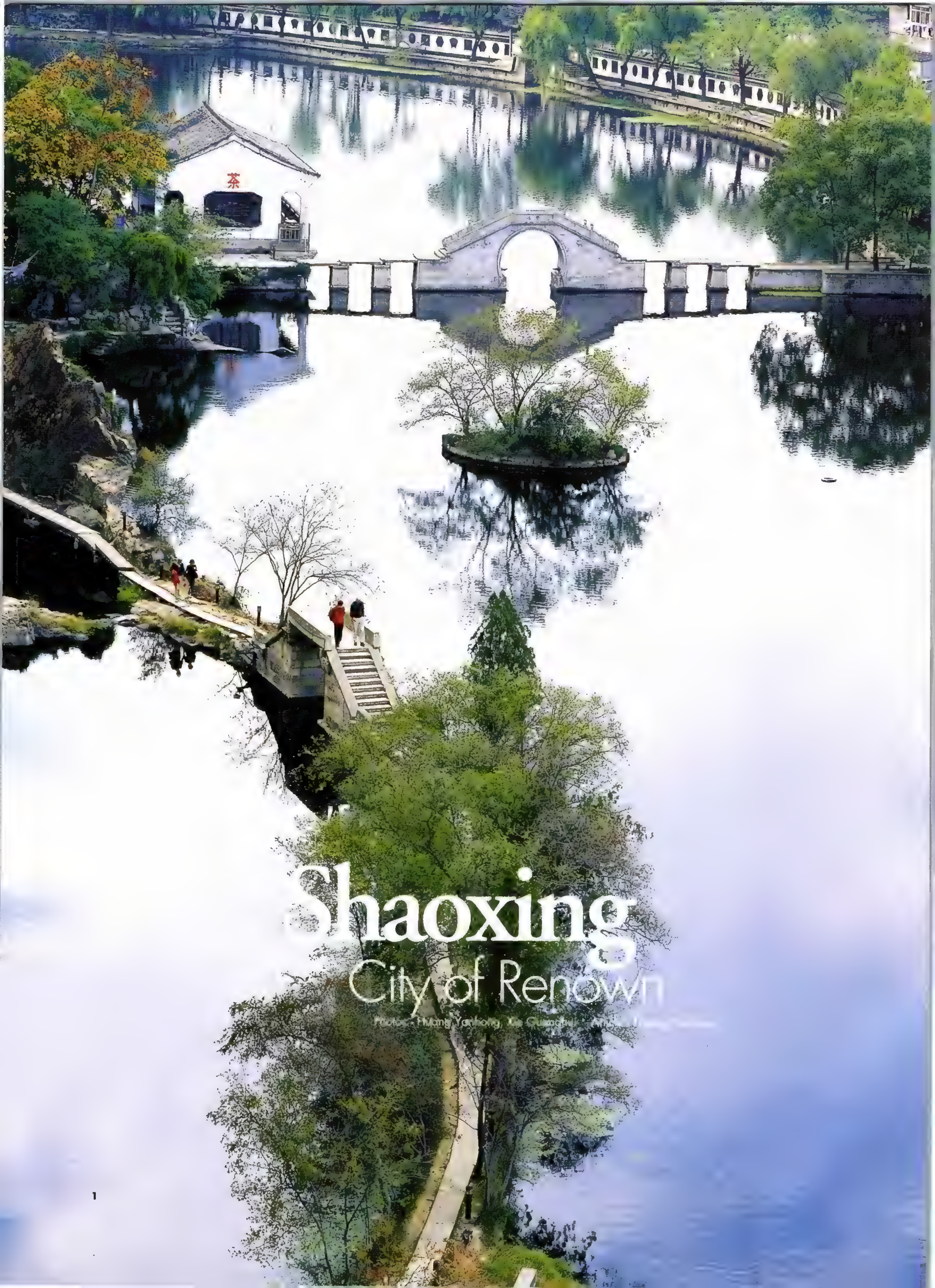
Specialties: Green parrot with red beak (spinach), Chang'an meat ball, dried stinky bean-curd, Xiaohu mutton, Haining salted meat, "eyes" cake, Zhuwanchang cake, etc



Eastern Zhejiang

Famous Figures and the Realm of Buddhism

Floating sea clouds have increased the mysterious ambience of Putuo Mountain (by Zhao Haiping)



Shaoxing

City of Renown

Photos: Huang Yanhong, Xie Guanghui Article: [illegible]

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I was reluctant to start writing during my visit to Shaoxing; it is so culturally stimulating that I didn't feel I could do it justice. No other place in Zhejiang can compete with the cultural density of Shaoxing, where every street, every bridge and every mansion has its own special story.

Without an umbrella, I walked through the old town as a light drizzle fell, my camera safely wrapped in plastic. Although I kept losing my way, I enjoyed the unfamiliar surroundings. This ancient city is vast but not flashy, massive yet simple.

Enlightened by Old Shaoxing

The best way to get to Zhou Enlai's (1898—1976, former Premier of China) old home is on Laodong (Labour) Road is by tricycle. Filled with awe and nostalgia, I stepped quietly into the house. As a primary school student 40 years ago, I had shaken hands with Premier Zhou. I was so nervous that I only said one sentence: "Grandpa Zhou, how are you?" Time flies, and now I am nearly old enough to be a grandfather myself, but I still remember Grandpa Zhou's smile and his voice.

Qiu Jin's (1875—1907, a revolutionary heroine of the late Qing Dynasty) gravestone stands at the T-intersection of Fuheng Street where she died a martyr. Now the area is a busy market jostling with cars and people. If you want to get close enough to take a picture of the marker, be careful of the vehicles driving past.

The most historic site is Ba Zi Bridge, the earliest known overpass in China. From the bridge you can watch the old black-awning boats being rinsed to a shine by the rain. The boatmen row their craft for tourists, earning enough to maintain their laidback lifestyle.

Birthplace of Literati Lu Xun

When visiting Shaoxing, do not miss Lu Xun's former residence.

The big north-to-south, six-courtyard house is where Lu Xun (1881—1936) spent his youth. The complex still reflects the time-honoured lifestyle of a scholarly family.

Lu Xun's family was well known in Shaoxing. His grandfather Zhou Fuqing worked as an editor and

1. The East Lake is a famous scenic spot in Shaoxing (by Xie Guanghui)

2. The corridor bridge over the Huancheng (Surrounding the City) River in downtown Shaoxing (by Huang Yanhong)

compiler for the Imperial Academy. The family's fortunes later declined, but this was a blessing in disguise for Lu Xun, giving him the chance to get acquainted with the lower strata of society. This contact inspired him to write such great essays as *The Story of Ah Q* (1921), *Kong Yiji* (1919), *Diary of a Madman* (1918) and many others.

The Bai Cao (One Hundred Herbs) Garden behind the house is where Lu Xun caught crickets, picked raspberries and dug flowery knotweed root as a child. Green vegetable beds, tall honey locusts and purple-red mulberry trees still flourish there, but the tranquillity of that time no longer exists. The San Wei (Three Flavours) Academy, a very famous private school where Lu Xun studied from the ages of 12 to 17, is just one street away from his house. Enter the Si Ren (Thinking of Benevolence) Hall and turn left to see the school principal's study where Lu Xun read lessons. The structure is fenced off, but tourists may view it from a short distance.

Another must-see is the celebrated Xianheng Chinese Restaurant at the end of a walking street, not far from Lu Xun's former home. The hotel's waitresses dress in the old-fashioned calico clothing so prevalent during his lifetime.

Luzhen: Lu Xun's Fiction in Reality

A quarry during the Three Kingdoms period (222—280), the Keyan Scenic Area in Shaoxing County is now a tourist attraction. At the entrance stands a huge stone statue of Buddha carved into a rock surrounded by water. Passing through the area, I came next to Yuezhong (In the Middle of Eastern Zhejiang Province) Garden of Renowned Personages filled with stone sculptures depicting famous Shaoxing natives from every dynasty. Following that treat, I visited Jianhu, or Mirror Lake. The lake is not particularly large, but the surface is packed with six floating restaurants and many black-awning boats.

I then took a boat to the pier of Luzhen. Several "guards" dressed in Qing-dynasty garb and a group of village girls welcomed visitors. Luzhen is a newly developed tourist attraction where scenes from Lu Xun's novels come to life. Here you can enjoy a recreation of the society Lu Xun lived in, famous characters from his writings and the customs of old Shaoxing.

Traces of Calligrapher Wang Xizhi

Regarded as a "calligraphy saint", Wang Xizhi (303—361) was born into a wealthy family during the Eastern Jin Dynasty (317—420). He worked as an official in Shaoxing for several years and left his imprint there.

I noticed an ancient bridge as I wandered around the old downtown area. When I reached it, I found it was the famous Ti Shan (Writing Calligraphy on Fans) Bridge. A stone tablet at one end tells of Wang Xizhi seeing a granny selling fans but failing to attract any buyers. After decorating the fans with Chinese characters, he said to her, "Tell your customers that the calligraphy is by Wang Youjun (one of his pseudonyms), then you can sell them for 100 coins each." The granny did as he said and sold them all.

鲁迅故里
LU XUN NATIVE PLACE

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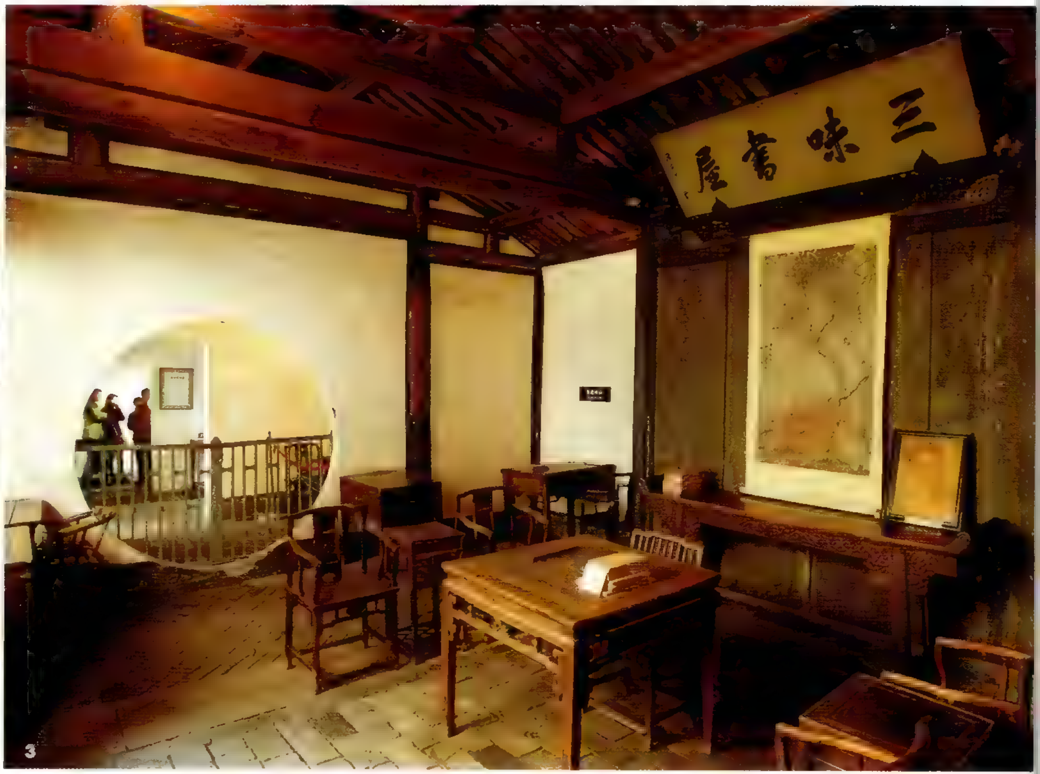

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1. The Great Yun Gu Le Buddha statue stands at the entrance to Keyan (by Xie Guanghui)

2. The Sanwei Study as it would have looked in Lu Xun's time (by Xie Guanghui)

3. The Xianheng Chinese Restaurant, which maintains its original ambience as described in Lu Xun's stories, attracts many visitors (by Suzan So)

4. Lu Xun's home village is the most important cultural scenic spot in Shaoxing (by Huang Yanhong)

Duo Po (Hiding from Granny) Lane is also related to this story. I had a little trouble finding it, but saw a bridge shaped like a Chinese calligraphy brush rack. After Wang Xizhi helped that granny, she chased after him every year, asking him to decorate her fans with his calligraphy. Weary of her ceaseless pestering, he tried to avoid her, hence, the name.

I walked several metres further and arrived at Wang Xizhi's former residence. The entrance, however, bore the words "Jie Zhu (Abandoning Pearls) Temple". Later I learnt that when Wang Xizhi lived here, he lost a pearl that he liked very much and

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suspected an old monk who often visited him of stealing it. Hearing of this, the old monk offered no explanation and eventually died of depression. Eventually, Wang Xizhi discovered that his goose had swallowed the pearl by accident. Wang felt so ashamed that he decided to abandon his pearl-collecting hobby as penitence and changed the name of his house to Jie Zhu Temple to commemorate the old monk.

Orchid Pavilion, Sacred Home of Calligraphy

Lanting (Orchid Pavilion), built some 1,600 years ago, is a famous scenic spot today. In 353, Wang Xizhi invited 42 of China's literati here to participate in an activity called "Floating Wine Cups on the Winding Water".

The activity was extremely interesting: cups of wine were sent floating from the upper reaches of a winding stream. Wherever a cup stops, the person sitting nearest it must write a poem or he will be punished by being made to drink the wine.

Wang Xizhi compiled the poems written during the event into a book and, at the insistence of the attendees, penned a 324-character preface, which is the well-known *Lan Ting Ji Xu* (Preface to the Orchid Pavilion Collection). The Lanting Pavilion has been a sacred place for calligraphy in China ever since. The poetry writing event is still held today.

Shenyuan, a Garden of Forbidden Love

Shenyuan Garden was where Lu You (1125—

1210), a patriotic poet of the Southern Song Dynasty, compiled the famous Chinese love poem, *Chai Tou Feng* (Phoenix Hairpin). The poet was in love with his cousin, Tang Wan, whom was known by him since childhood. When Lu was 20 years old, he married Tang Wan. However, their love was strongly opposed by Lu's mother, who even forced them to divorce eventually. Lu and Tang later were arranged to marry another person respectively. A few years later, Lu was alone in Shenyuan Garden, drinking wine in depressed mood. Suddenly, he saw Tang Wan and her husband. Both Lu and Tang were still deeply in love with each other. With the permission of her husband, Tang, affectionately, presented a cup of millet rice (or yellow wine, specialty of Shaoxing) to Lu You, before leaving the garden. Lu was so touched and sad that he immediately used a writing brush to write *Chai Tou Feng* on a brick wall. The poem

1. The E Chi (Goose Pond) Stele graces the Orchid Pavilion (by Xie Guanghui)

2. "Floating Wine Cups on the Winding Water", a poetry writing event created by Wang Xizhi during the Eastern Jin Dynasty, has taken place for generations (by Ren Jing)

1. The Mirror Lake at sunset (by Xie Guanghui)

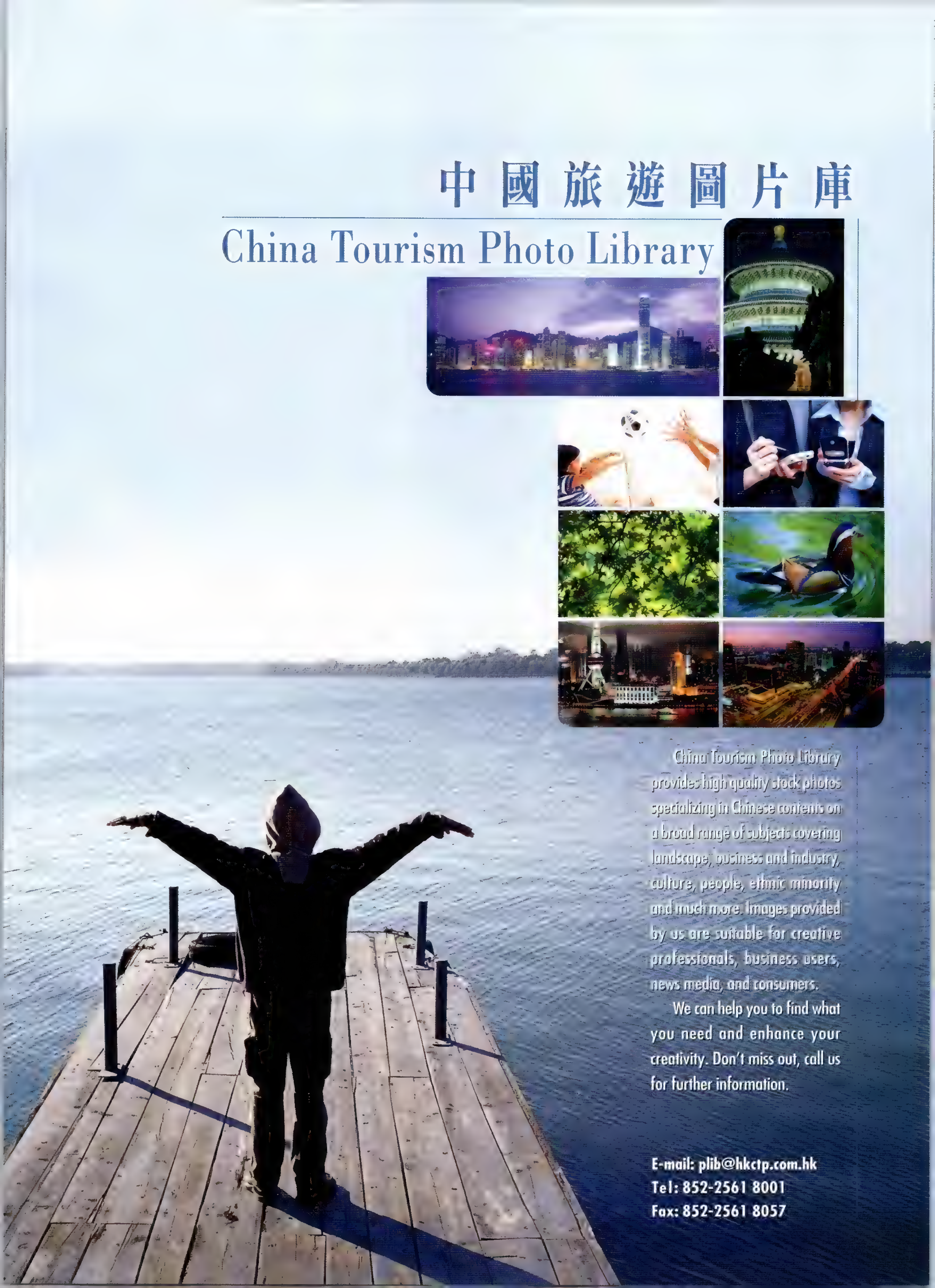
2. A bronze statue of famous Tang poet Lu You (by Huang Yanhong)

reflected his love to Tang, his sorrow of being apart from her, as well as his discontent about his mother. Tang recorded the poem and read it over and over, and finally understood the meaning. She wrote back a poem to Lu You of the same title, also expressing her regret about their forbidden love. Since then, Tang became seriously ill and died soon. Knowing this, Lu You was overwhelmed with grief and felt even harder than being killed. In order to miss his love, he had visited the garden and written more love poems.

I've have long desired to visit the garden, and today my wish came true. Along the road there was a line of colourful flags written with the words: "Shen Yuan, Famous Garden of Love." At a corner of the garden I saw a wedding-dress photo shop. Most of its customers are lovers who have just visited the garden.

It was winter when I visited; the garden looked a bit desolate. The lotus leaves withered in the pond. The wall on which Lu You wrote Chai Tou Feng has disappeared already. Fortunately, it was rebuilt with original old bricks, on either side of which are Lu You's poem and Tang Wan's poem.

In the garden there is the Museum of Lu You that records Lu You's life. Several girl students came in. After seeing Lu You's bronze statue, one of them exclaimed, "Lu You looks quite handsome!" Then, she took a picture with the statue. I remembered there was a Sad Bridge mentioned in another poem of Lu You. As the locals guided it could be found in the East Garden. I went there. When I stepped on the bridge, seeing the desolate scene and thinking of the sad story, I felt tears choking in my eyes.



中國旅遊圖片庫

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The term "bund" instantly brings Shanghai to mind, but the bund in Ningbo, Zhejiang Province, is 20 years older. Many tycoons who have played important roles in the economies of both Shanghai and Hong Kong were from Ningbo: Bao Yugang (1918—1991, China's No. 1 ship owner), Tung Chao Yung (1912—1982, famous shipping entrepreneur and father of former Chief Executive of the HKSAR Tung Chee Hwa), Sir Run Run Shaw (born 1907, showbiz tycoon), as well as Chiang Kai-Shek (1887—1975, leader of the Kuomintang Party) are probably the best known.

The 600-metre long riverbank at the convergence of the Yongjiang, Yuyaojiang and Fenghuajiang rivers is known locally as "the Old Bund of Ningbo". After the First Opium War (1840—1842), Ningbo was opened as one of five treaty ports, two decades before the Bund in Shanghai was similarly opened.

[illegible] Past and Present

By the early 20th century, the bund at Ningbo already had all the characteristics of a thriving international metropolis: foreign consulates; Catholic churches; police, customs and post offices; schools; shipping, insurance and tobacco companies; nightclubs, brothels, restaurants and cinemas.

From 1840 to 1949, Ningbo evolved from "a port of sailboats" to "a port of ships". In the winter of 1854, a group of Chinese investors paid a foreign businessman in Guangdong 70,000 ingots of silver for a huge steamship. They christened it Baoshun (Precious and Smooth) and hired 79 crew members,

1. Ningbo sits at the convergence of the Yongjiang, Yuyaojiang and Fenghuajiang rivers. When night falls, thousands of dazzling lights brighten the riverbanks (by Song Xingguo)

Ningbo
A Cultural Port

Photos · Song Xingguo, Xie Guanghui Article · Gu Huada

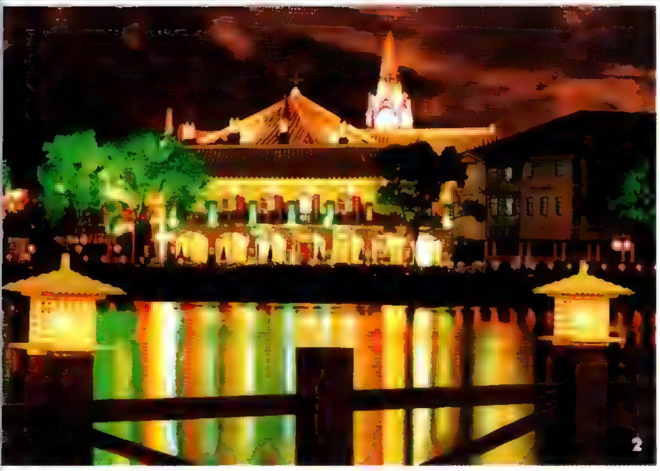
giving Ningbao its very own steamship. After the American Qichang Ship Company opened the Yongshen line (from Ningbo to Shanghai) in 1862, another 13 shipping companies settled on the bund. Piers large and small were built all along the route from Ningbo to Shanghai; the bund had entered its golden age. By 1936, the port boasted 20 ship piers, 30 berths and more than 100 docks and piers for smaller vessels. Foreign merchants and goods have been flooding into Ningbo ever since, stimulating industry and commerce.

Today, Ningbo is an international deep-water port with a capacity of 100 million tons, making it the second largest port in mainland China. Its extensive network includes strait ports, river ports and inner river ports. Ningbo's bund sits cosily between art galleries, premier hotels and international restaurants on the river side and trade clubs, apartments and other private homes on the landward side. Its historic Gothic and baroque buildings harmonize well with China's traditional residences and alleyways.

The gourmet is easily satisfied here with every cuisine imaginable on offer. Authentic French, Thai, and even Brazilian restaurants sit alongside famous-brand ice cream shops, cafes, renowned domestic teahouses and jazz bars. The old British Consulate has been converted into a foodie's paradise, where the pleasures of the palate can be indulged while gazing on fantastic views of the river.

The History of the Ningbo Merchants' Associations

In the last century, there were 10 big merchants' associations in China, the Ningbo one was the most powerful. By the end of the 19th century and the early 20th century, a survey was taken which showed that among the immigrants in Shanghai, Guangdong people and Ningbo people were the majority. And as for the influential immigrants in the industrial and commercial circles, the Guangdong association accounted for 10 percent, other associations made up 20 percent while the Ningbo association took 70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percent! In 1920, in the Shanghai public foreign settlement (colonial area), there were 680,000 Chinese people, among whom 400,000 were from Ningbo. Bao Yugang, Tung Chao Yung, Run Run Shaw, Cao Guangbiao (1921—) and other people from the Ningbo merchants' association created miracles one by one in the commercial realm in Hong Kong. The Ningbo merchants' association influenced not only Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Shanghai and Hong Kong in the terms of industry, commerce and finance but also the development of China's industrial, commercial and financial fields.

Referring to the Ningbo merchants' association, we have to mention Zhenhai, which was the

1. Ningbo's bund is 20 years older than the Bund in Shanghai (by Xie Guanghui)

2. The Ningbo bund by night (by Song Xingguo)

3. Former residence of Bao Yugang (by Xie Guanghui)

4. Former residence of Run Run Shaw (by Xie Guanghui)

5. Ningbo Port, an international deep-water port, a navigation hub and an international container port, is the second largest port in mainland China (by Song Xingguo)

birthplace of the Ningbo merchants' association and had nourished a group of renowned merchants such as "Bare-foot Fortune God" Yu Qiaqing (1867—1945), "King of Hardware" Ye Chengzhong (1840—1899), "World's Ship Tycoon" Bao Yugang, and "Movie Tycoon" Run Run Shaw. Of the 45 famous people's former residences in Zhenhai, over 30 belong to people of the Ningbo merchants' association. And so far, Zhenhai is the place with the highest density of the former residences of the Ningbo merchants' association in China. Furthermore, there have been 24 members of the Chinese Academy of Science and the Chinese Academy of Engineering who were born there, nowhere else in China has numbers like this.

About two kilometres to the east of Zhuangshi Street of Zhenhai, on a wide concrete road there stands a solemn stone memorial archway, on top of which are the three big characters "Zhong Bao Village" written by Mr. Bao Yugang. Bao Yugang's former residence is situated here. It is a typical residential building of Eastern Zhejiang in the Qing Dynasty. It has green tiles, brick walls and two stories, showing age and simplicity; inside there are five rooms, two corridors, four chambers and a courtyard in the middle. It is written in a historical document that the former residence of the Bao Family was built in the first year of the reign period Jiaqing of the Qing Dynasty (1796) by Bao Zheng (999—1062, an

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(丰镐房)

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upright official of the Song Dynasty)'s 20th generation descendent, Bao Kuizhi.

Where Chiang Kai-shek "Serves the People"

At least half of Ningbo's visitors come to see Chiang Kai-shek's former residence at Xikou, named for its location at the mouth of the Yanxi Stream in Fenghua County. Just 35 km southeast of the city, Xikou is the busiest tourist area in Ningbo. Renovated by Chiang Kai-shek in 1929, the Wuling Gate on the town's east side is a solemn tower-like building with its tiles and upturned eaves. Horizontal signboards on either side of the gate display the characters "Wu Ling", with those on the eastern side written by eminent Kuomintang member Yu Youren (1879—1964) and the other penned by Chiang Kai-shek himself.

Passing through the gate, you'll see Wuling Street, where more than 10 Chiang family heritage sites can be found. On the left near the gate is a small hill called Wulingtou (or Tandunshan), and on the right is the Wuling School, of which Chiang Kai-shek was principal in 1932. The villa at the foot of the mountain by the Yanxi Stream was the home of Chiang Jingguo (born 1910, Chiang Kai-shek's son, Taiwan's ex-president) and his Russian wife, Chiang Fangliang (1916—2004), after he came back from the Soviet Union. Tourists may hire the bamboo rafts near Wuling Pond to take in the scenery along the Yanxi Stream.

At Chiang Kai-shek's birthplace, "the Yutai Salt Shop", and on the street, villagers wander around

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1. Farmer Chiang Xiaobao of Xikou looks a bit like Chiang Kai-shek. Tourists often have their picture taken with him (by Xie Guanghui)

2. Qinqiao Bridge and the Tianfeng Pagoda (by Song Xingguo)

3. Dongqian Lake, said to have the grace of the West Lake and the vigour of Taihu Lake, is the largest freshwater lake in Zhejiang Province (by Song Xingguo)

4. Built in 1561 during the Ming Dynasty, Tian Yi Ge is the oldest existing library in China (by Xie Guanghui)

5. A display at the Scholars' Hall in the ancient township of Cicheng City recreates an imperial examination in feudal China (by Xie Guanghui)

dressed as the venerable general. In their long robes or Chinese-style unlined jackets and white gloves, walking sticks in hand, they hail tourists constantly. Some will even address you, saying, "Mr Chiang is here to serve you." If you have a photo taken with one of them, remember to tip them 10 to 20 yuan.

Volumes of History

Ningbo has a long history and a profound culture. From the 7,000-year-old Hemudu Civilization to the touching legends of Liang Shanbo (from *Outlaws of the Marsh*) and Zhu Yingtai (from *Butterfly Lovers*) of the Eastern Jin Dynasty (317—420), from the Maitreya Buddha's (Monk with a Cloth Bag) birthplace to the world-famous reputation of the Red-party tailors of modern times, Ningbo has many interesting stories.

The Tianyige library west of Yuehu (Moon Lake) is the oldest existing library in China, dating back more than 430 years. It was built during the reign of Jiajing (1522—1566) of the Ming Dynasty under the charge of Fan Qin (1506—1585), Assistant Minister of the Department of War. Fan Qin was fond of collecting the ancient classics and had gathered more than 70,000 volumes. In 1772, the 37th year of Qing Emperor Qianlong's reign, the monarch called for a compilation of the *Si Ku Quan Shu* (Complete Collection of Books in the Four Treasuries). Fan Qin's eighth-generation descendent Fan Maozhu donated 638 titles, prompting the emperor to order the building of a library based on the Tianyige complex to house seven sets of the *Si Ku Quan Shu*. As a result, Tianyige itself became famous all over China.

In Ningbo city proper, on the eastern bank where the three rivers converge stands the Qing'an Assembly Hall, also known as the Tianhou (Goddess of the Sea) Palace. Completed in 1853 with funding from Beiyang (the Qing Danasty name for the coastal provinces of Liaoning, Hebei and Shandong) shipping merchants, the hall, where sacrifices may be made to the goddess, also functions as a party venue for shipping industry merchants. One of only eight Tianhou palaces in China and one of seven such assembly halls, it is the only existing ancient complex

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1. The graceful scenery of Xuedou Mountain (by Xie Guanghui)

2. Vivid statuary at the back of the main hall of the Asoka Temple, a famous Chinese temple of Zen Buddhism (by Yang Dazhou)

3. Xuedou, another famous Buddhist temple in eastern Zhejiang Province, is also one of the world's 10 Zen Buddhist temples. The rites of the Maitreya Buddha are performed here (by Xie Guanghui)

4. The ruins of Hemudu culture reveals evidence of the ancient matriarchal society from the Neolithic Age some 7,000 years ago (by Song Xingguo)

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in the country to operate as both. The brick, stone and wood carvings of traditional Ningbo craftsmanship that adorn the structure form a masterpiece of local modern artwork.

Well-Suited City

At the end of the Qing Dynasty and the beginning of the Republic of China (1912—1949), the Ningbo tailors who made suits especially for foreigners (nicknamed "Red-hair") came to be called the "Red-party tailors". Historical documents show that the first suit of clothes made in China, as well as Dr Sun Yat-sen's uniform and even the first book on suit-making theory, were all the work of Ningbo natives. For a long time, Ningbo tailors monopolized China's suit-making business. Later, the most famous tailor shops operating on Shanghais' famed Nanjing Street were nearly all run by people from Ningbo. Today, Ningbo is a true fashion capital. One out of every 10 items of clothing churned out by China is made here. The city's annual international fashion festival attracts hundreds of overseas and domestic fashion magnates.

Meanwhile, at the third Chinese Love Festival held in Ningbo from October 1~7 in 2005, 66 couples from China and Italy (where Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet is set) took part in a mass wedding ceremony at Liang Zhu Cultural Park. Newlyweds regularly come here to take have their pictures taken. Ningbo is also applying for "intangible world cultural heritage" status for its Liang Zhu Cultural Festival. Almost every Chinese knows the happy Maitreya Buddha (Monk with a Cloth Bag), but very few know that he came from Ningbo's Xuedou Temple.

Translated by Nicole Ouyang

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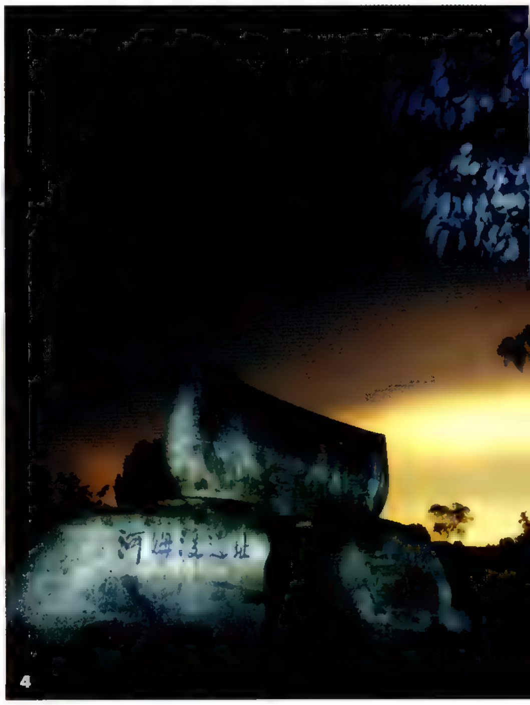

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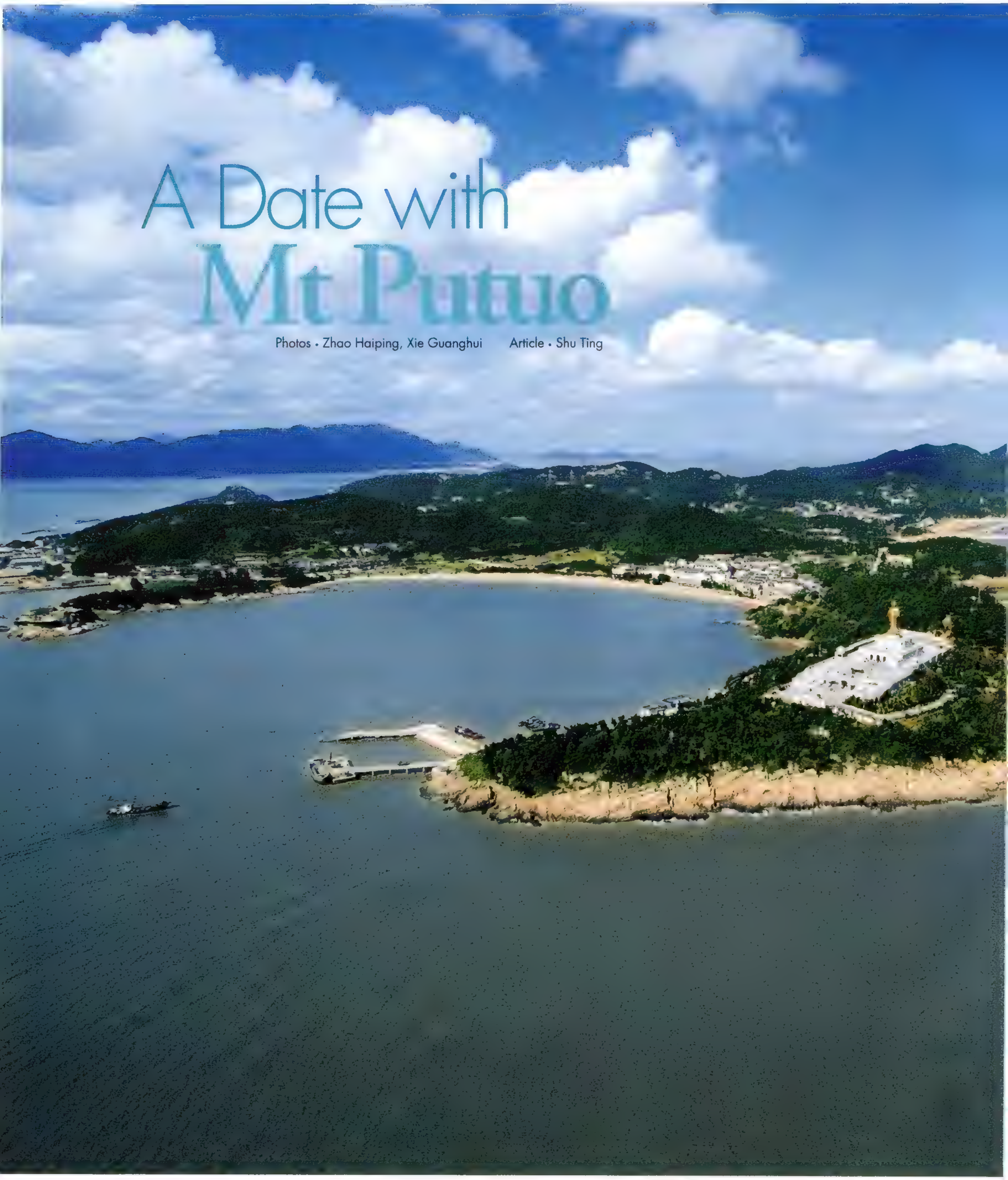
A Date with
Mt Putuo

Photos • Zhao Haiping, Xie Guanghui   Article • Shu Ting



Putuo Mountain is located on an Island (by Zhao Haiping)

With the finely-printed invitation safe in my pocket, I breathlessly elbowed my way through a mob of passengers whose angry looks stung me like thorny brambles. But that was nothing compared to the worst mishap to befall the woman traveller—my suitcase hadn't arrived from Shanghai.

And so I attended the opening ceremony of the Nanhai (South China Sea) Guanyin Cultural Festival on Putuo Mountain still dressed in the wrinkled jeans and T-shirt I'd been wearing the night before.

Wishes Left Unspoken

The festival's main stage at the foot of the bronze Nanhai Guanyin (Goddess of Mercy) statue faced the surging waves of the sea.

Standing 33 metres tall, the statue rises against a background of blue water and sky. Holding the Wheel of the Law in the left hand and displaying the gesture of fearlessness with the right, the face of the solemn, majestic Goddess of Mercy glows like a full moon, high atop Long Wan Gang (Dragon Bay Mound).

We'd spent the previous night on stormy waters after our boat passed the Lianhua (Lotus) Ferry. Raindrops continued to fall, battering the car windows all through the next morning as we drove past Nan Tian Men (South Heaven Gate) and Zi Zhu Lin (Purple Bamboo Grove) on our way to the event. I was given a raincoat, but as the sound system, the lotus lamps and the seat cushions had all been covered with plastic sheeting, I wondered whether the ceremony would be held on schedule. A crowd packed the square. Mr He, our young guide from the Administrative Bureau, assured me that the sun would come out once the meeting started. He said it happened every year when it was raining.

I didn't dare challenge him, but how could he make such a guarantee?

Then, as the great Buddhist master took hold of the microphone and the Buddhist horns sounded high and loud, the rain suddenly stopped and the clouds receded. Warm sunshine beamed on the statue's face, highlighting the Goddess' lively features. I was stunned.

After the brief opening ceremony, a Buddhist service was held in the Hall of Merit and Virtue, to ease people's suffering and bring joy to their lives. As

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a special guest, I was presented with a wish card. It is said that anyone who writes his or her wishes on the card will be blessed and taken care of by the Bodhisattva.

So many things, from the world's ecological situation to my missing suitcase, passed through my mind. Yet, with pen in hand, poised to write, I felt empty. My maternal Christian grandmother told me that all things should be arranged by God alone. My paternal Buddhist grandmother used to warn me that everything has its cause and effect, depending on one's self-cultivation over a long period of time. I had never even burned a joss stick before; how could I ask the Bodhisattva for such a favour?

A gaunt village woman looked up at me, a weary expression on her face. I handed her the card, saying, "This is for you." Surprised at first, she moved back two steps and then grasped it as if it were a treasure. "Can you read?" she asked. I slid the cap off my pen and said I would write her wish for her.

The woman's dull eyes suddenly sparkled, but she seemed perplexed. She took the card from my hand once again, saying quite seriously that she would have to discuss it with her husband, and then she disappeared into the crowd.

Dumbstruck, I looked around at the precious images of the Bodhisattva, 500 bronze statues of all sizes, all of which were smiling silently. Just let her go, I thought. The Bodhisattvas will spare everyone their suffering no matter where the cards end up.

Every Bend in the Path Leads to Buddha

I stayed at the four-star Xilei Xiaozhuang Hotel just three minutes' walk from Puji (Universal Relief) Temple. Just southeast of it stands the Yuan Dynasty (1279—1368) Duobao (Multi-treasure) Pagoda, the oldest extant building in the area and one of the three treasures of Putuo Mountain.

Puji Temple, also called Front Temple, is the main temple dedicated to Guanyin on Putuo Mountain. Built in 1080 during the Song Dynasty (960—1279), it houses plenty of plaques bestowed by emperors of later dynasties. A couplet on the front gate, which is usually closed, indicates the temple's supreme Buddhist status: "A peerless land bestowed by five-dynasty emperors; the first mountain respected by the four seas."

Magnificent in scale, Puji Temple has nine majestic halls, the main hall being Dayuantong (Great Wisdom in Penetrating Universal Truth). A nine-metre tall statue of Vairochana Guanyin in the central hall is flanked by 32 Guanyin incarnate showing the bodily transformations of Guanyin.

A Buddhist service to pass on the "lamp of the mind" was held at the Lotus Pool in front of Puji Temple Gate for the Cultural Festival that night. The Lotus Pool was originally called the Ocean Symbol Pool, a fish pond found in all Chinese temples. Its present name came from the red lotus growing in it. "A moon-lit lotus pool" was among the 12 scenic spots on Putuo Mountain selected by Qing Dynasty (1644—1911) scholar Qiu Lian.

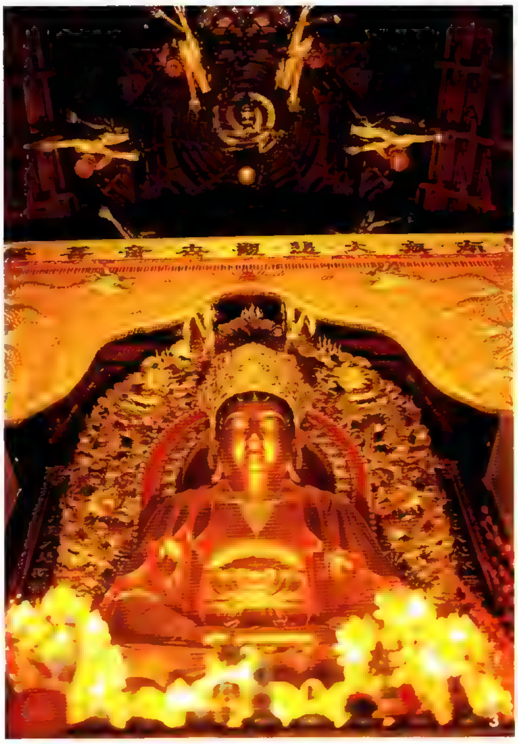
Although the night was cloudy, the pool was alight with red decorative lotus lamps. Chinese and foreign tourists and Buddhist followers walked slowly along the designated course, lamps in hand, forming a luminous wheel of dharma with the enlightened collective consciousness.

My suitcase finally arrived! I was as happy as if meeting my lover after a long separation. Was this because I had lit the lamp of my mind?

I was now worry-free and slept soundly that night. Waking early next morning, I changed into dry, clean clothes. As it was a clear, fine day I took a minibus to Fayu (Dharma-rain) Temple.

The Ming-Dynasty (1368—1644) Fayu Temple, also known as the Back Temple, has six halls, all laid out to follow the contours of the mountain. Its resplendent yellow-glazed roof tiles are visible amid towering ancient trees. The guide said its Dayuantong Hall (also called Nine-Dragon Hall) had been dismantled and moved from the Ming-Dynasty Imperial Palace at Nanjing. The central hall features a huge statue of Vairochana Guanyin, behind which the Thousand-Armed Guanyin, carved from fragrant camphorwood, is enshrined.

A steep, winding pilgrim pathway leads out from the west side of Fayu Temple. I saw a few pilgrims kow-towing every few steps, their foreheads stained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1. Buddhists from all over pray for peace in front of the great statue of Nanhai Guanyin (by Zhao Haiping)

2. Abbot Jin Shan (middle) holds a Buddhist service (by Zhao Haiping)

3. The Guanyin Hall of Nine Dragons in Fayu Temple was built from the dismantled Ming-Dynasty Nine-Dragon Hall. Architecturally, it is of the highest standard of Chinese temple buildings (by Xie Guanghui)

with a little blood. I then climbed the 1,088 stone steps to Huiji (Salvation through Wisdom) Temple.

Huiji Temple is also called Fodingshan (Buddha Head Mountain) Temple as it sits atop the mountain. The layout of the neatly structured temple resembles the gardens typically found south of the Yangtze River. The main Mahavira Hall, which features Sakyamuni and two of his disciples, is the only temple on Putuo Mountain that enshrines the Buddha instead of Guanyin. The Buddha is honoured in the highest temple on the mountain to show reverence. Had I not known that Guanyin is female, I might have thought that Buddhism valued men more highly than women.

The sun had arisen fully by the time I reached the top of Foding (Buddha Head) Mountain. Bathed in the sunlight that had been absent for so long, the surface of the vast sea glistened and I felt as if the sun's rays were penetrating my whole body, washing me crystal clean.

The Puji, Fayu and Huiji temples are the three most important and classical sacred buildings on Putuo Mountain. In recent years the mountain has been quite prosperous, with many refurbishments and expansions, as well as new buildings. More temples might be hidden amid the trees and flowers.

On my way down the mountain, I met a man in monks' robes who asked for a bit of money to cover his travel expenses. Still immersed as I was in temple incense, I hurriedly opened my purse. Afterwards a village woman drew me aside and quietly explained that if he was a real monk, he could stay at a temple for a short time, receiving free food and board, and be given some travelling money before leaving.

How dare he swindle someone on this pure Buddhist land? Wasn't he afraid of retribution? Then I remembered a couplet at Puji Temple: "Buddha's profound perfect virtue saves mankind from the sea of misery, including me; on the world's bumpy roads, who should I think of but the Buddha?" All the Bodhisattvas know we live in a rough world, so they don't mind phoney monks cheating in their domain. Why should we let them get us down?

Every Twisted Finger Hurts

My itinerary indicated an afternoon visit to Zi Zhu Lin, or the Purple Bamboo Grove. As I know nothing about architecture, I won't describe the structural features of this temple but simply say that its bright yellow outer walls, carved beams and columns were refined and elegant.

I liked the "Courtyard of Guanyin Who Does Not Want to Leave", a small chapel of three rooms surrounded by low yellow walls, the most. The first statue of Guanyin brought from far away is enshrined here, the original Guanyin, to whom people made offerings. Being the first temple on Putuo Mountain, it always attracts a large number of worshippers and pilgrims.

A fascinating story lies behind the temple's origins.

Putuo Mountain became a Buddhist sanctum in the Tang Dynasty (618—907), when some Hindu monks came here to cultivate themselves: "They saw with their own eyes the appearance of Guanyin preaching and bestowing a seven-coloured precious stone." According to historical records, in 863 (the fourth year of Tang-Dynasty Emperor Xiantong's reign) an eminent Japanese monk named Egaku visited Wutai Mountain in Shanxi Province. He succeeded in bringing a statue of Guanyin from Wutai to Ningbo, from where he wanted to ship it with a trader to Japan. As the boat passed Putuo, stormy waves rocked the sea and impeded the boat's progress. Egaku suddenly realized what was happening and prayed:

If Guanyin did not want to go to Japan then wherever the boat stopped, he would build a temple to enshrine the statue. Sure enough, thousands of iron lotus flowers appeared on the waves and guided the boat to Chaoyin (Sound of Tide) Cave at the foot of Putuo Mountain. Egaku dared not disobey Guanyin's will and, with the help of the locals, he constructed the "Courtyard of Guanyin Who Does Not Want to Leave" in the island's Purple Bamboo Grove. This is the story of "a famous mountain chosen by the Buddha".

I liked this Guanyin with her distinct personality, who knows what to love and what to hate, and I especially liked the "Courtyard of Guanyin Who Does Not Want to Leave". This straightforward name must have come from the local folk dialect. I worshipped this free-willed Guanyin from the bottom of my heart.

In the past whenever the numbers of Buddhist worshippers increased, pilgrims often sacrificed themselves by jumping into the water from Chaoyin Cave, "to escape from the sea of bitterness and reach the western paradise". The cliff came to be called Sacrifice Cliff. Some pilgrims also wrapped their fingers in cloth strips swabbed with wax and burnt them to show reverence for the Buddha and to pray for the appearance of Guanyin. During Ming Emperor Wanli's reign some 400 years ago, assistant regional commander Dong Yongsui built a "No-Sacrifice Pavilion" here to stop people from jumping into the sea or singeing their fingers. It is a pity that the pavilion has since been destroyed.

How stupid and cruel was such self-sacrifice and torture! I guess their acts were also meant to be threatening, but how could Guanyin obey them?

These practices reached their height during the Qing Dynasty. So the then-local governor Li Fen and assistant regional commander Chen Jiu'en erected a stele at the gate of the courtyard. The rough stele had no elegant calligraphic inscription, but it is now protected as a cultural relic because of the words carved on it: "Guanyin revealed herself in order to teach people and save them from peril, not to see them sacrifice their lives or burn their fingers. Today, Buddhist followers should cultivate themselves by doing good deeds to reach perfection in due course. If they jump off the cliff or burn their fingers, they commit sins and defile the temple. This stele is to inform the public that if any foolish men or women commit such sins in spite of this advice, they will be arrested and punished by the court."

Persuasive and humane, the stele advises people to treasure life according to Buddhist tenets, along with sterner legal warnings to impress the point. Out of curiosity, I bit one of my own fingers — any one of them feels pain!

Seafood Under the Camphor Trees

One of the four great Buddhist mountains and a holy land in the hearts of Buddhists, Putuo Mountain enjoys a high religious status. Because of its unique geographical location and topographical structure, it is rich in tourism resources and has just been named "one of China's 10 most beautiful islands".

The fragrant aromas of Putuo Mountain come not only from its temples and flowers, but also from its wonderful food.

Putuo Mountain is famous for its fishermen's dishes, we convinced our host to take us to a farmer's courtyard for dinner.

The island's original residents were all fishermen, many of whom have opened small restaurants as tourism has developed. We seemed to have chosen the most popular one, filled as it was with the greasy, sweaty faces of contented diners. Even local officials wanting to entertain guests here must wait patiently for a table. Sadly, the name of the restaurant has slipped my mind, but I think it's somewhere near the Lianhuawu Ferry.

Our table was under an old camphor tree. From my seat on the rustic wooden bench, I could smell warm rice wine in the air. The freshly caught shrimp, fish and crab in our hotpot were jumping and turning somersaults as we rolled up our sleeves and prepared to eat. Delicious...really delicious! I ducked behind a mound of empty shells, trying to mask my greedy appetite, and almost put a fallen camphor leaf into my mouth, mistaking it for an herb.

The vegetarian food served at the temple must be equally good. I know some large temples like Puji offer food to tourists at low prices. But it was served quite early and I missed out. Next time, I will be sure to try it.

Afterwards, my group mates and I went to the renowned 1,000-Metre Beach to rest from our feasting.

Translated by Yu Ling

1. Pilgrims from Fujian Province worship Buddha and offer joss sticks at Huiji Temple atop Foding Mountain (by Xie Guanghui)

2. The giant carved "heart" character, located southeast of Xi Tian Men (West Heaven Gate), is the largest stone-carved Chinese character on Mt Putuo (by Xie Guanghui)

3. Nan Tian Men scenic area on Mt Putuo (by Xie Guanghui)

Travel Tips of Eastern Zhejiang

Shaoxing

Day 1: Set out from Hangzhou for an hour's ride. Visit the hometown of literati Lu Xun in the morning. Visit Shenyuan Garden and Orchid Pavilion in the afternoon. Stay in Shaoxing overnight.

Day 2: In the morning, go to Shaoxing County by bus. In the morning, travel around in Luzhen, Keyan and Jianhu (Mirror Lake). Visit East Lake in the afternoon. Spend another night in Shaoxing.

Day 3: In the morning, take a bus for an hour to Xinchang County. Visit the Great Buddha Temple. Visit Tomb of Great Yu and Mt Huijishan. Stay in Shaoxing at night.

Day 4: By bus, travel to Zhuji and walk around in the hometown of Xi Shi, one of the Four Great Beauties in ancient China. Go back to Shaoxing in the afternoon. Visit the former residences of Zhou Enlai and other celebrities. Stay in Shaoxing for the fourth night.

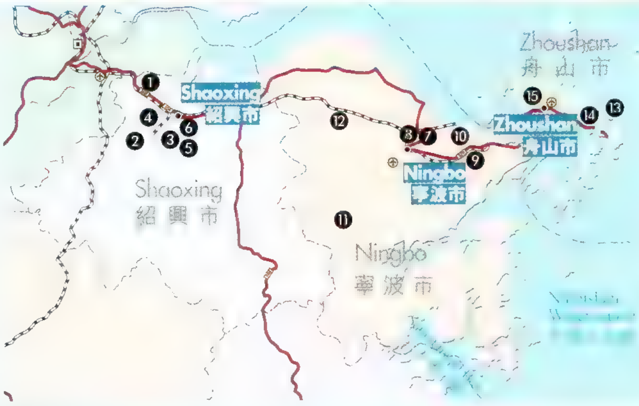
Ningbo

Day 1: In the morning, start off from Shaoxing or Hangzhou and travel for two hours to Ningbo by car. Visit Hemudu in Yuyao and have a walk in Liangzhu Park. In the afternoon, go to Tianyige and Qingan Guild and see Laowaitan in the evening. Stay overnight in Ningbo.

Day 2: In the morning, explore the scenic area in Xikou, Fenghua. Visit the Tengtou Village in the afternoon and Dongqianhu Lake Tourist Area. Stay in Ningbo at night.

Day 3: In the morning, see the Tiantong Temple and the Asoka Temple. Visit the old homes of Bao Yugang and Run Run Shaw. Stay in Ningbo for another night.

Day4: Leave Ningbo for Mt Putuo. You are recommended to stay one night on the mountain.



Zhoushan

Day 1: Set out in Ningbo in the morning. A bus ride for 2.5 hours to the ancient city of Dinghai, Zhoushan. In the afternoon, visit the old homes of San Mao and Tung Chao Yung (father of former HKSAR Chief Executive Tung Chi Hwa). In the evening, enjoy seafood and the fishing harbour view of Zhengjiamen.

Day 2: Go to Putuoshan in the morning. A one night stay there is recommended.

Day 3: Visit Zhujiajian in the morning and Taohuadao in the afternoon. Return to Ningbo at night.

Day 4: Go to Hangzhou or Shaoxing from Ningbo. Or take a flight to leave.

Transportation

Hangzhou — Shaoxing

Train: From 01:24 to 21:05 daily, several trains from Ningbo to Shaoxing. Travelling time: about 1 hour.

Bus: Take a bus in Hangzhou Station. Frequency: about every 10 minutes from 6:30 to 19:20. Fares: from 10.8 yuan to 18.3 yuan.

Hangzhou — Ningbo

Train: From 01:24 to 21:05 daily, several trains from Hangzhou to Ningbo. Travelling time: about 2.5 hours.

Bus: At the Hangzhou Bus Station. Frequency: about every 10 minutes from 06:00 to 20:00. Fare: 48 yuan

Ningbo — Zhoushan

Ferry: From Ningbo to Putuoshan Passenger Terminal, 15 ships daily.

Flight: The Putuoshan Airport is situated in the northern part of Zhujiajiang. No fixed flights. Make an enquiry call beforehand on 0580-2026 799.

Accommodation

Shaoxing

Rates: 398 ~ 1,127 yuan (discount in slack season)

- Xianheng Hotel (5-star)
  Add: 680 south of Jiefang Road, Shaoxing, Zhejiang Province
  Tel: (575) 8068 688
- Yadu Hotel (3-star)
  Add: 218 Renmin Road Middle, Shaoxing, Zhejiang Province
  Tel: (575) 5122 258
- Shaoxing Yin Tai Hotel (3-star)
  Add: 255 Renminxi Road, Shaoxing, Zhejiang Province
  Tel: (575) 5117 788

Ningbo

Rates: 288 ~ 1,472 yuan (discount in slack season)

- Ningbo Nanyuan Hotel (5-star)
  Add: 2 Lingqiao Road, Ningbo, Zhejiang Province
  Tel: (574) 8709 5678
- Zhenhai Xiangyu Xinxing Hotel (3-star)
  Add: 57 Hangyong Road South, Luotuo, Ningbo
  Tel: (574) 5616 0888
- Jinfeng Hotel (3-star)
  Add: 567 Huancheng Road North (west section), Ningbo
  Tel: (574) 8721 3456

Zhoushan

Rates: 480 ~ 1,588 yuan (discount in slack season)

- Putuoshan Hotel (4-star)
  Add: 93 Meicin Road, Putuoshan, Zhoushan
  Tel: (580) 6092 828
- Zhoushan Golden Bay Hotel (3-star)
  Add: 601 Bingang Road, Shenjiamen, Zhoushan
  Tel: (580) 3025 000
- Shenjiamen Hotel (2-star)
  Add: 71 Dunghai Road Middle, Shenjiamen, Putou, Zhoushan
  Tel: (580) 3066 111

Scenic Spots in Shaoxing

1 Ancient Towpath

The ancient towpath is a five hundred years old passageway for boat trackers. It has been on the list of cultural relics under national protection.

Ancient towpath (by Suzan Su)

Transportation: Take a glimpse of the towpath by a bus (not via the highway) from Hangzhou towards Shaoxing.

2 Orchid Pavilion

The great Chinese calligrapher, Wang Xizhi gained his fame by creating his masterpiece Lan Ding Ji Xu in 353. His name has been well known to people for 1,600 years. The place has given the name the famous land of Chinese calligraphy.

Transportation: Take bus No.3 at the train station or a west route tour bus.

3 Museum of Lu Xun

The museum has a rich collection. In addition to texts and photos, there is also some furniture used by Mr. Lu Xun.

Transportation: All the sites about Lu Xun all are located in the city centre. Take a taxi and it costs about 5 yuan.

Opening hours: 08:00 ~ 17:00

Admission: 60 yuan (package ticket)

Former residence of Lu Xun (by Huang Yanhong)

4 Luzhen, Jianhu and Keyan

The construction of Luzhen is based on the settings of a town described by Lu Xun in his fictions. Jianhu (Mirror Lake) is famous for its superb pure water which is used for brewing the world known rice wine of Shaoxing. Cloud Bone is the most amazing quarry site in the Keyan scenic zone, comparable to the Hou Peak.

Transportation: Take bus No. 77 on Zhongxing Road in the urban area of Shaoxing. Bus service is also available at 08:20 daily in Wushan Square, Hangzhou.

Opening hours: 08:00 ~ 17:00

Admission: 100 yuan (package ticket)

5 Shenyuan Garden

Shenyuan was originally the property of a man surnamed Shen. It has became a celebrated garden since the Southern Song Dynasty, because of the romance between the poet Lu You and his lover Tang Wan.

Transportation: Take the no.7 bus at the train station or the east route tour bus.

Opening hours: 08:00 ~ 17:00

Admission: 25 yuan

6 East Lake

The area had been a quarry mine since the Han Dynasty and the impact of mining created the lake.

Transportation: Take bus No.1 bus at the train station or the east route tour bus.

Opening hours: 07:00 ~ 17:30

Admission: 25 yuan

Other tourist attractions

Former residence of Qai Yuan-pei, Zhou En-lai Memorial Museum, Ancient Shaoxing City, Xinchang Great Buddha Temple, Hometown of Xishi, Jinhu State Wetland Park

Scenic Spots in Ningbo

7 Old Bund

Lao Waitan of Ningbo is the oldest bund in China and it was built 20 years earlier than the Shanghai Bund. The district has many old streets.

Transportation: It is situated in the city centre. Going by taxi costs 5 yuan.

8 Tian Yi Ge Library

It is one of the three oldest private libraries in the world.

Getting there: Take the No.560 bus at the Ningbo Train Station.

Opening hours: 08:00 ~ 17:30

Admission: 20 yuan

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9 Tian Tong Temple

Tiantong Temple is also known as "Buddhist Realm in Southeast China" and is one of the "Five Great Woods" in China.

Transportation: Take bus No. 362 at the bus station.

Admission: 10 yuan

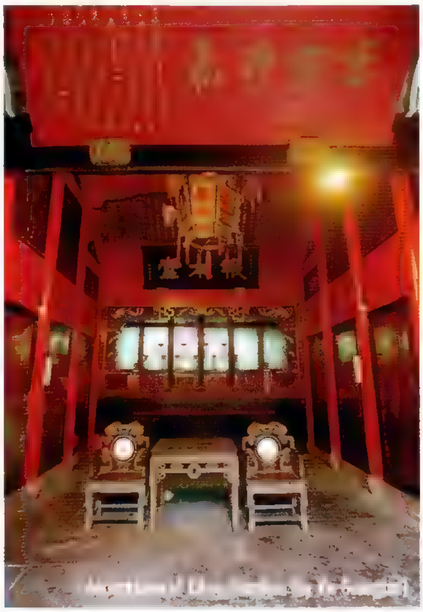
10 Asoka Monastery

One of the major Buddhist monasteries in China. More than 600 buildings erected on the slope remain today.

Transportation: Take bus No.82 to the monastery at the Ferry Terminal. Or at the East Bus Station, take a bus toward Daqi, Chaiqiao,or Baifeng Pier.

11 Xikou Town, Fenghua

According to folklore, the fictional Taohuayuan (Peach Blossom Paradise) created by the poet Tao Yuanming is actually today's Xikou. It is also the hometown of Chiang Kai-shek and Chiang Jingguo.



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12 Ruins of Hemudu Culture

Hemudu, a globally well-known Neolithic site, is the relic of the matriarch clan of 7,000 years ago.

Transportation: Take the bus to Yuyao at the South Bus Station in Ningbo and get off in Hemudu. There is transport service to the museum and the first car runs at 6:00.

Opening hours: 08:00 ~ 17:30 (Apr ~ Sept), 08:00 ~ 17:00 (Oct ~ Mar)

Admission: 20 yuan

Other tourist attractions

Qing'an guild, former residence of Run Run Shaw, Beilun Port, Tiantong Forest Park, Liang Zhu Culture Park, Dongqian Lake, former residence of tycoon Yu Qiaqing, or ship owner Bao Yugang

Scenic Spots in Zhoushan

13 Mt Putuo

Putuoshan, among the four great Buddhist mountains in China, is the only one situated on an island. It is also known as "Buddhist Realm on the Sea".

Transportation: The Putuoshan Airport has no fixed flights. Make an enquiry call on (580) 2026 799. If setting out in Hangzhou, you can take a bus at the East Bus Station to Shenjiamen. The first bus departs at 07:30 and one bus runs every hour. The express bus takes 4 hours to Shenjiamen. Then take the ferry to Putuoshan at the Benshengdong pier in Shenjiamen. It takes about 10 minutes and the fare is 18 yuan.

Opening hours: 24 hours

Admissions: 110 yuan for entering the mountain gate; 130 yuan

14 Fishing port of Shenjiamen

Shenjiamen, the largest natural fishing port in China, is also known as "Little Shanghai" and "Pier of Living Water".

Transportation: In East Bus Station in Hangzhou, take a bus to the Shenjiamen Bus Station which is a walking distance from the port.

15 Former residence of Tung Chao Yung

Tung was one of the seven greatest ship owners in the world and he owned 149 ships during his most prosperous years. The routes of his fleet cover all parts of the world.

Opening hours: Not officially open to the public yet

Shenjiamen Seafood Restaurant (by Xie Guanghui)

Other tourist attractions

Former residence of San Mao (famous female writer), Peach Blossom Island, Zhujiajiang's building, Dinghai, Shengsi Islands, Daishan Island, sand sculpture beach, etc.

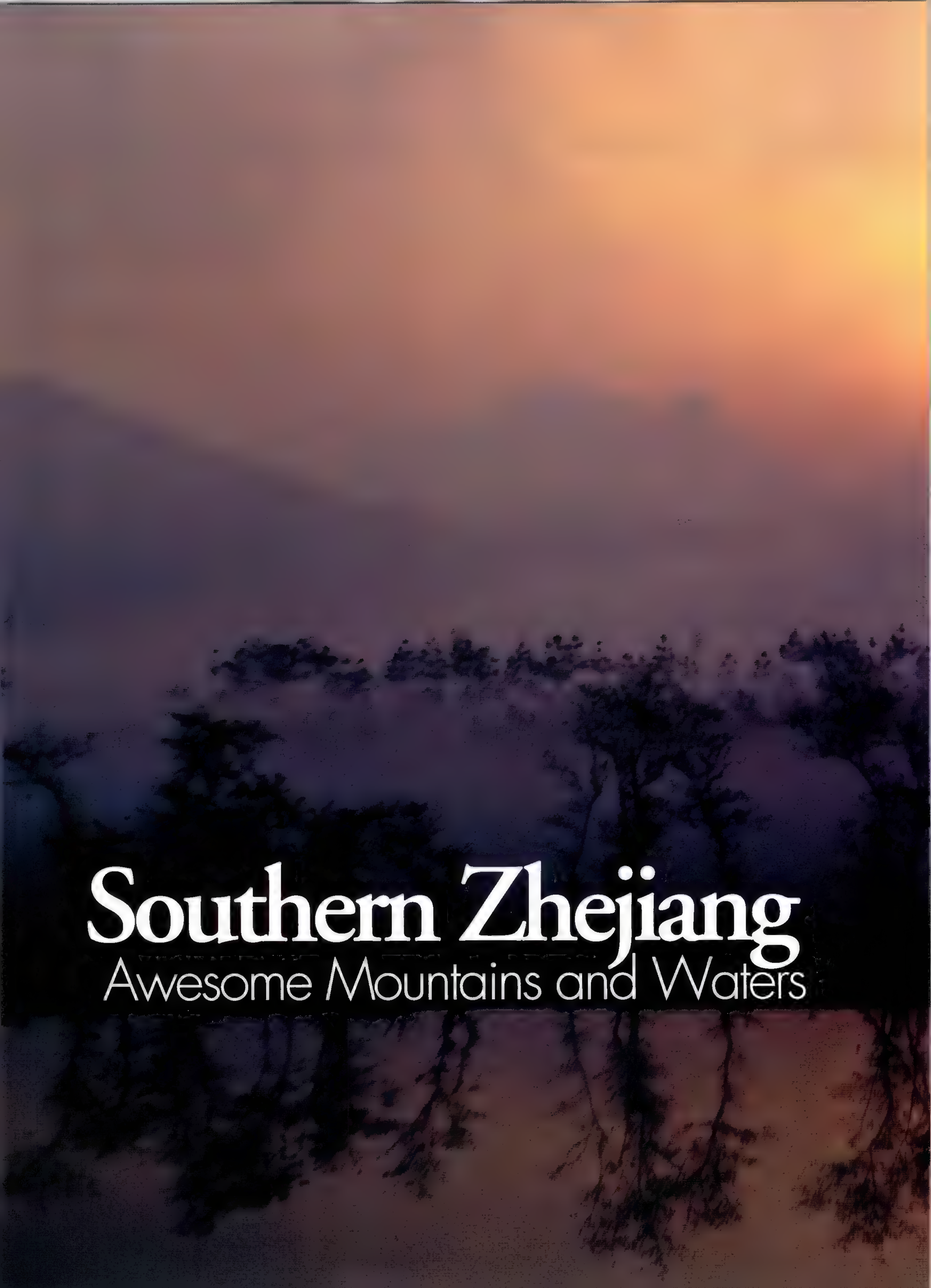
Specialties

Shaoxing: Yellow wine, beans flavoured with aniseed, fermented beancurd

Ningbo: Seafood such as groupa and blue crabs

Zhoushan: Seafood such as shells and dried shrimp. Putuo Buddha Tea

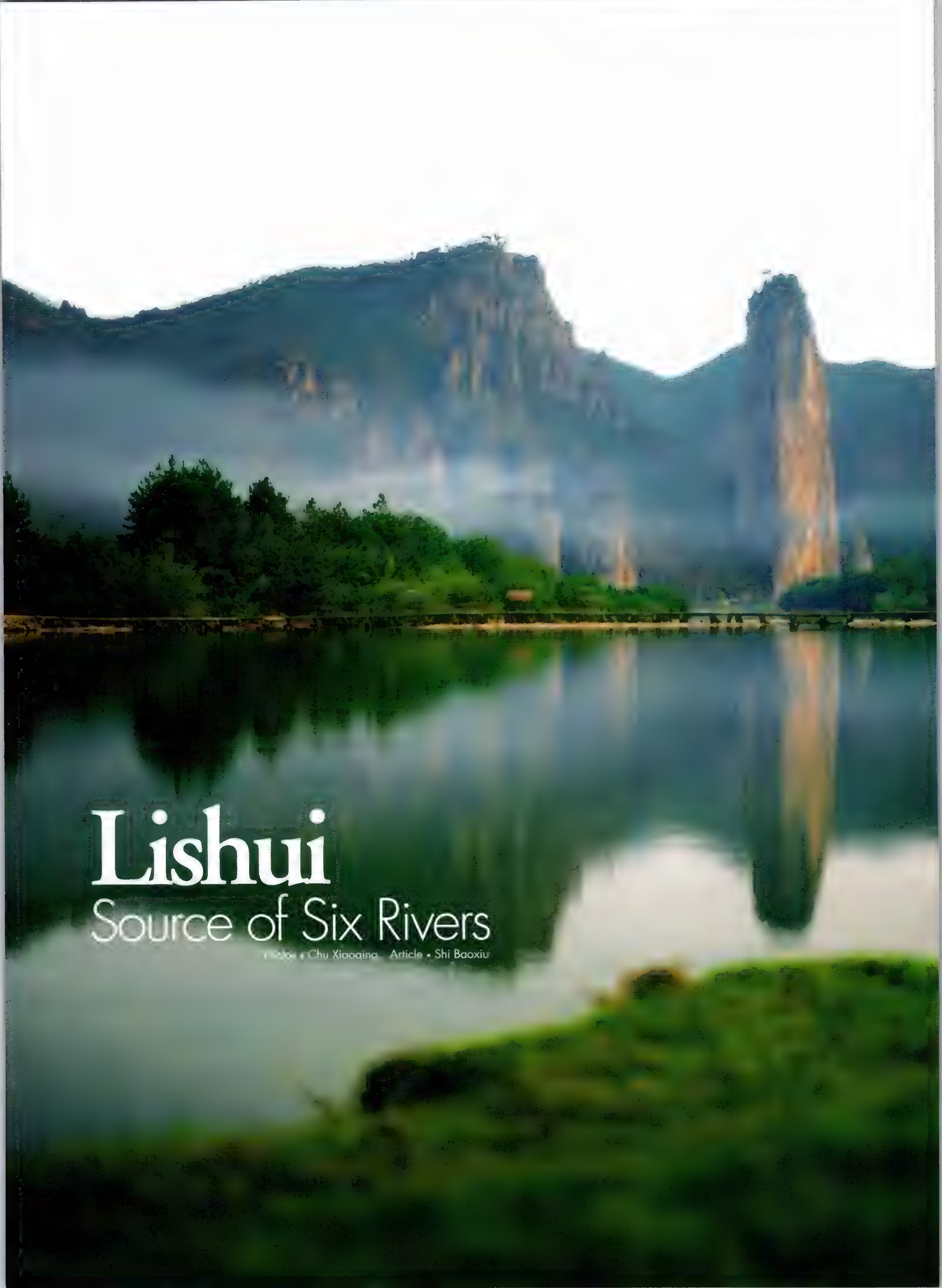
Shaoxing yellow wine (by Xie Guanghui)



Southern Zhejiang

Awesome Mountains and Waters

A fairy scene of the Haoxi River in Xiandu, Jinyun (by Chu Xiaoqing)



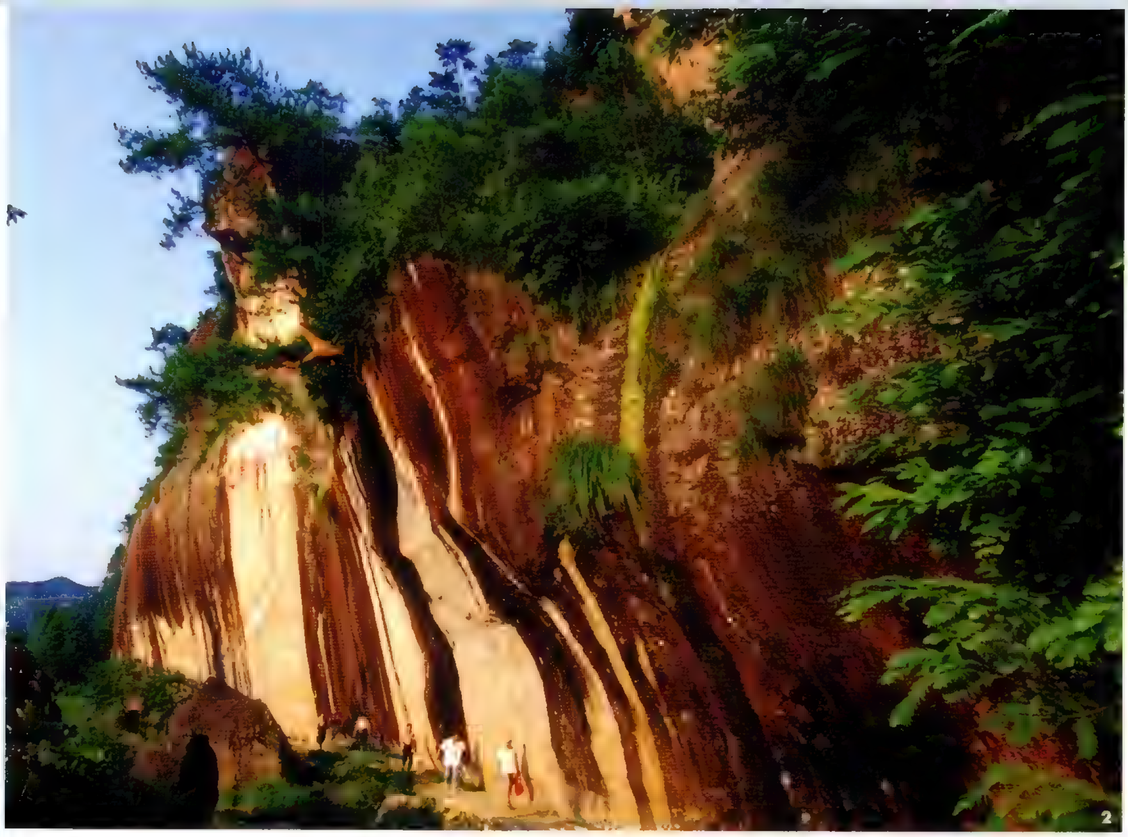
Lishui

Source of Six Rivers

Photo • Chu Xiaoqing   Article • Shi Baoxiu

1. Dinghu Peak in Xiandu is where the Yellow Emperor is said to have extracted immortality pills and ascended to Heaven

2. The striking slopes of the Lesser Red Cliff



Lishui (Charming Water), source of the Oujiang, Qiangtangjiang, Feiyunjiang, Lingjiang, Fu'anjiang and Minjiang rivers, is not only beautiful in name but also in scenery. Perhaps that beauty has inspired centuries of the area's skilled craftsmen: China's famous Longquan swords, graceful celadon pieces and delicate Qingtian stone carvings are all produced in this area.

The first time I saw Lishui 20 years ago, I was deeply impressed. When I went there again in 2005, to my surprise the urban area was so completely different that thought I had gone to the wrong place. But the scenery, in Xiandu (literally meaning "fairyland"), Jinyun County, was still as extraordinarily beautiful as it had been two decades before.

Walking by Haoxi Stream that evening, I marvelled again at the water, clear right down to the stones and sand at the bottom, and at the sheer cliffs, formed by volcanic eruptions, rising on either side. The village sits at the river bend, a cluster of three- and four-storey buildings taking the place of the single-storey white-walled and dark grey-tiled homes that once stood there.

Where the Yellow Emperor Ascended to Heaven

Fantastic and solemn, Dinghu Peak in Jinyun County is a narrow tower of rock more than 170 metres tall. The top of this majestic peak is crowned with...a puddle. But this is no ordinary rain puddle. According to legend, the indentation was formed by the bronze tripod that the emperor used to make immortality pills, hence the name Ding Hu Feng (Tripod Lake Peak). When the emperor's pills helped him attain the highest state of spiritual enlightenment, he ascended to the Heavens on a red dragon. In 748 during the Tang Dynasty, local officials presented a report to Emperor Xuanzong stating that on June 8 colourful clouds would appear while red-crowned cranes danced gracefully around Dinghu Peak, accompanied by spiritual music and mountain echoes of the phrase "Long life". Extremely excited by this news, the emperor changed Jinyun's name to Xiandu (Fairyland). The place became one of his three favourite imperial palaces outside the capital, along with those at Huangshan (Yellow Mountain) and the Lushan Mountains.

Boating on Oujiang River and Splendid Terraced Fields

Leaving Jinyun we drove south to Yunhe County where Yunhe Lake is located next to Qian Dao Hu (Thousand-Island Lake) in Zhejiang Province. It used to be a watercourse of the Oujiang River and the large body of water was created by the construction of a large dam. When the water overflowed, several hills and ridges either side of the river became isolated islets. Though not as big as Thousand-Island Lake, it is famed for its variety of green pines, firs and bamboo. Yunhe's quiet beauty is the perfect accompaniment to a leisurely boat cruise.

Great swathes of the mountainsides all around Xiangong (Fairy Palace) Lake are covered with terraced fields. When the rice seedlings are planted in the spring and the fields are filled with water, the terraces catch the morning sun like mirrors (see also pages 16~17).

Slash-and-Burn Farming Continues

Heading south, and after driving about 20 km along the mountain path, we arrived in Jingning, the only She Autonomous County in China. She (畲) means "newly burned farmland", indicating the primitive slash-and-burn farming technique. The ethnic group also calls itself Shan ha, meaning "mountain dwellers". The She ethnic group can be traced back to "Panhu", who once held a high position in Central China and was recognized for meritorious service to safeguard the country. Due to the turmoil of war, the whole clan eventually moved to the Fenghuang Mountains area of Guangdong and gradually the ethnic group was formed. Pushed out and oppressed by feudal officials, the Shes moved even deeper into the mountains, surviving on hunting and reclaiming abandoned land. The Jingning She Autonomous County was officially established in 1984.

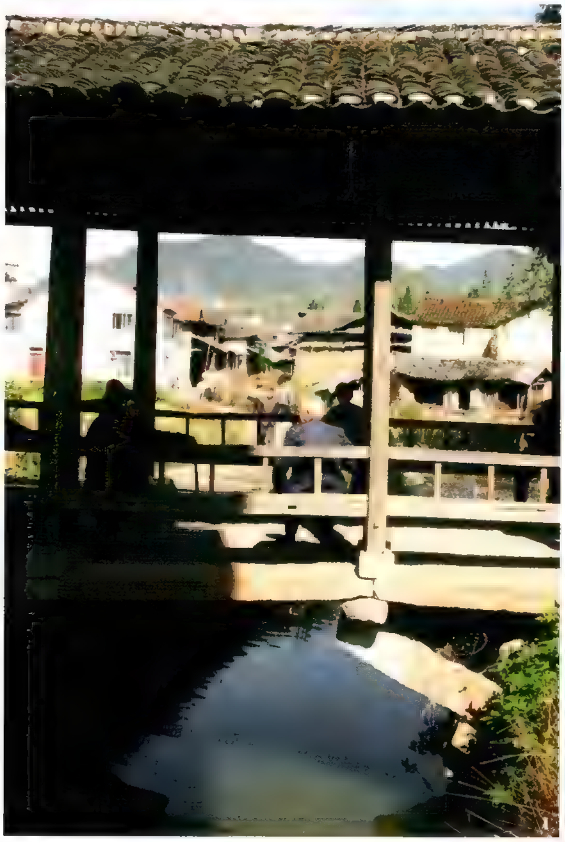
Today there is little difference between the dress and language of the Shes and the Hans. But at the Dajun Township She Customs Village, visitors can learn more about She traditions through demonstrations of ancestor worship, antiphonal singing, dance and wedding customs by performers wearing the ethnic dress and ornaments of their forebears.

Longquan Sword and Song-dynasty Celadon

We drove past mountain after mountain, delighting in the singular craggy scenery, and reached Longquan in southwestern Zhejiang Province on the border of Fujian and Jiangxi provinces. At 1,929 metres, Huangmaojian Peak in the Fengyang Mountains of

1. An ancient bridge in an old village in Fushan Township, Qingtian (by Shi Baoxiu)

2. Traditional Oujiang sailboats on Yunhe Lake (by Lu Zhouliang)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Longquan is the tallest peak in Zhejiang Province. The streams that wind around the mountains gave birth to the Oujiang, Wuxi and Minjiang rivers. The Fengyang Mountains have been added to the national list of natural reserves. The area's five top scenic spots—Longquan Gorge, Qixing (Seven-Star) Pool, the queer pines on the cliffs, Huangmaojian and the source of the Oujiang River - are open to the public.

Longquan is famous for its top-quality swords and beautiful celadon. As soon as I arrived I crossed the Oujiang Bridge by tricycle and walked around the urban area north of the river. Many of the stores were selling swords and celadon pottery. According to the locals, Longquan has been making swords since the Warring States Period (475—221 B.C.), at which time the skills of weapons makers would have been in great demand. Ou Yezi, a master sword-maker, was said to have fashioned three fantastic blades from iron sand collected at Qinxi Stream at the foot of the Fengyang Mountains. From then on the craft of sword-making was passed from generation to generation, and Longquan gradually became famous for its excellent swords. Longquan blades possess four essential characteristics; they are sharp, they are firm yet pliable, and they have a cold gleam and exquisite decorative patterns.

A friend in Longquan took me to the largest sword-making factory in the city. All sorts of swords, long and short, bronze wrestling swords, high-quality sabres, replicas of ancient swords, and even swords popular with exercise enthusiasts were on display in the exhibition room, all glittering in the brilliant light.

Longquan is equally famous for its celadon pottery. The kaolin (soft white clay that can withstand high temperatures) found at the foot of the Fengyang Mountains is essential to the making of celadon, as are the pine trees that cover the nearby mountains because they provide the fuel used to fire the kilns. But it's the skill of Longquan's ceramists for which the celadon is so celebrated.

The making of celadon in Longquan can be traced back to the Jin Dynasty, more than 1,700 years ago. Simple and elegant porcelain cooking vessels and vases made during the Jin and Tang dynasties can be viewed at the Longquan Sword and Porcelain Museum. During the Northern Song Dynasty, porcelain was produced on quite a large scale at Xikou, also at the base of the Fengyang Mountains. Then, with the invasion of the Jin state, the Song moved their imperial court to Lin'an (present-day Hangzhou) from its eastern capital city, Kaifeng. Though some territory was lost, the royal lifestyle was not affected and the imperial court continued to purchase Longquan porcelain in great quantities, increasing its worth.

Lifelike Qingtian Stone Carvings

We took a convenient short cut from Jingning to Qingtian on a narrow but smooth road.

Almost all of the families in Shankou Town, 20 km

from the county town, are in the stone-carving business. This being "China's stone-carving city" shop after shop was selling their works. As I walked along, I came upon one old street on which the homes looked markedly different from the town's more traditional houses. The locals called it "US Street". It turns out that in 1904, craftsmen from Shankou travelled to the United States, taking some of their stone carvings with them. The next year their carvings won a special prize at an international exhibition held by the US. From then on, a constant supply of Qingtai stone carvings was sent to America. With their newfound wealth the carvers purchased steel and cement building materials from Shanghai and erected houses similar to those they had seen in the US. More such houses were built and the street came into being. As the area's stone carvings have been sold abroad for more than 100 years, the number of overseas Chinese from Qingtian has increased in kind. Today, Qingtian has one of the highest populations of returned expatriate Chinese in Zhejiang Province.

Qingtian's Fushan Township is also worth visiting. Passing the old town seat, we stopped in front of a temple an hour's drive away. From the outside, the temple is nothing special, but a surprise waits inside - a statue of Li Mi, prime minister of the Tang Dynasty, is enshrined in the temple. The old man in charge said it was first a Taoist temple, but later Buddhas and arhats were also worshipped here, so it serves both religions. When pilgrims come they worship Li Mi first and then Buddha. The charming statues of several hundred arhats were delightful, with some depicted intonating, some crying loudly and others playing music, like county farmers having a jam session in the slack season.

The old man pointed me to an exhibition room at the Fushan High School. The school was run by a teacher of Zhang Xueliang (1901—2001), a Communist Party general who arranged the capture of the Kuomintang's Chiang Kai-shek during the Xi'an Incident of December 4, 1936. He successfully united the parties to fight against the Japanese invaders during the Civil War period in contemporary Chinese history. By the time the Japanese troops invaded Zhejiang, some of the government departments, newspapers and schools had moved to Fushan to hide deep in the mountains. This explained the large houses there that were quite different from those the locals inhabited. Then my friend and I walked around the old street close to the river where I noticed that the aging wooden shops and hotel buildings were still in fair shape, leaning only slightly after years of neglect. With a few repairs, they could recall the city's vibrant past beautifully.

Translated by Wang Zengfen

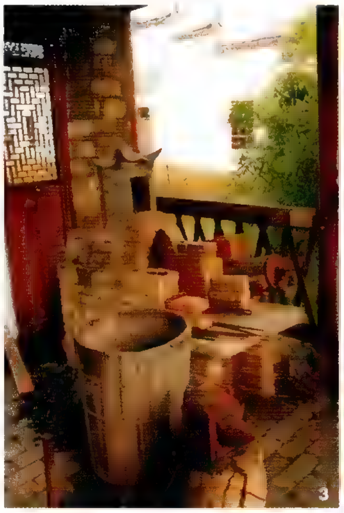
1. The traditional craft of sword-making still thrives in Longquan (by Zheng Xiaorong, Jin Chengshu)

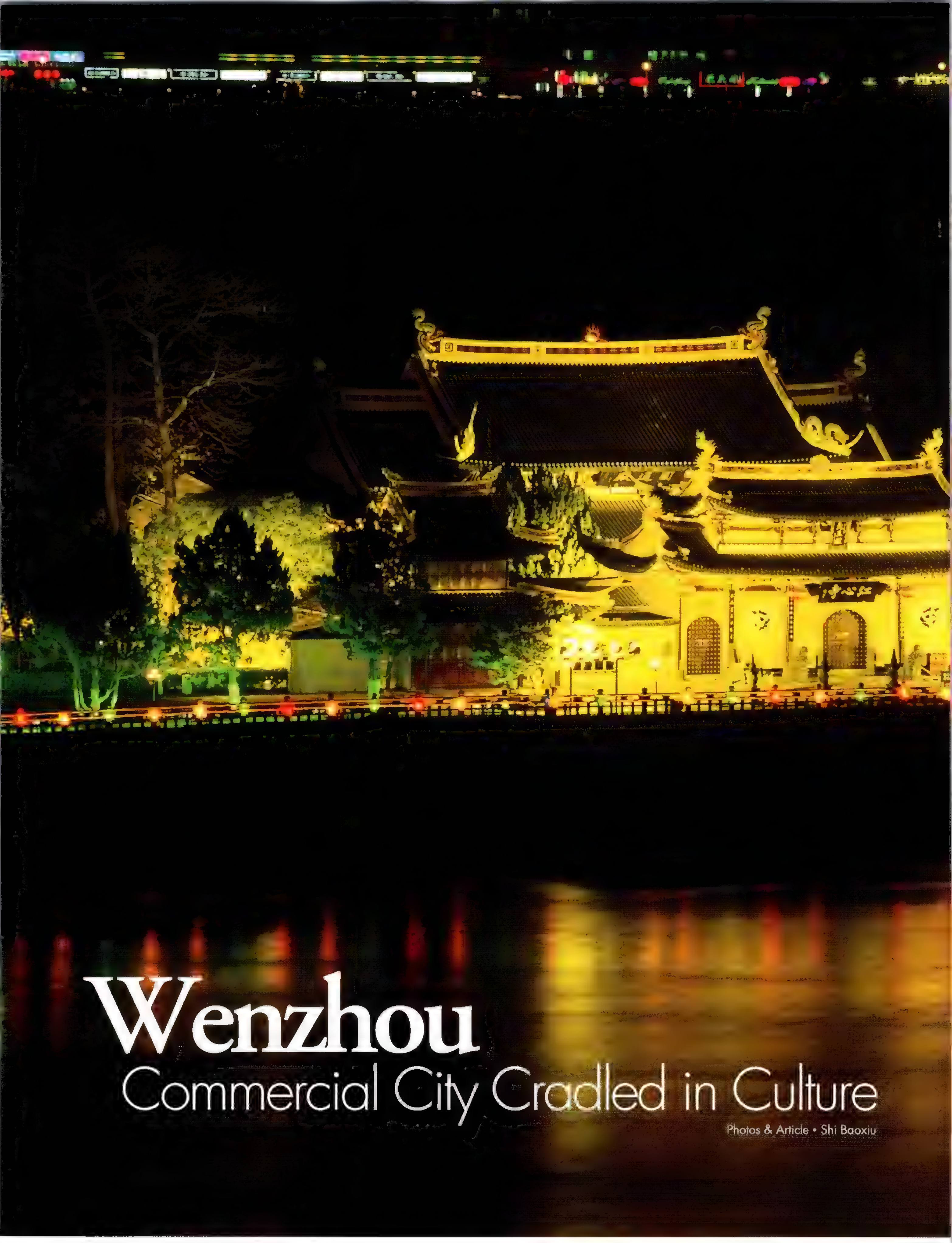
2. Glazing a celadon vase (by Zheng Xiaorong, Jin Chengshu)

3. Tools of the trade for an ancient Longquan sword workshop (by Shi Baoxiu)

4. A delicate, lifelike Qingtian stone carving (by Shi Baoxiu)

5. According to She ethnic group wedding customs, the bridegroom cannot take his bride back home without enduring some hardships (by Ye Liping)

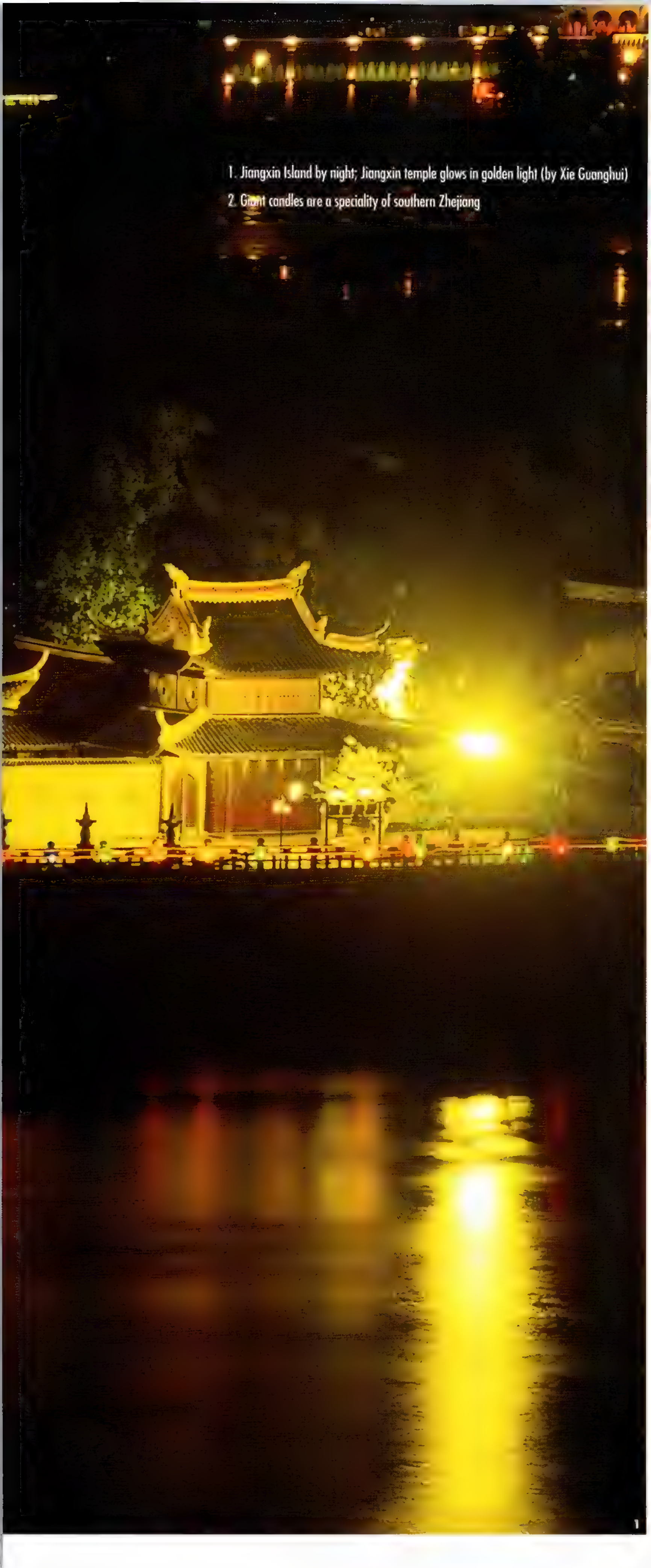




Wenzhou

Commercial City Cradled in Culture

Photos & Article • Shi Baoxiu



1. Jiangxin Island by night; Jiangxin temple glows in golden light (by Xie Guanghui)
2. Giant candles are a speciality of southern Zhejiang

Although known for pioneering China's free market economy in recent history and for being a commercial hub of International trade, Wenzhou is not all business and commerce. The city is surrounded by world-class scenic and cultural attractions that evoke ancient China and induce a nostalgia for times gone by...

Today's Wenzhou is not just a city, but a larger administrative region encompassing eight counties and cities and three districts, one of which — Lucheng District — is the former inner city of Wenzhou. In ancient times, Wenzhou was dubbea "the city of deer" According to legend, when the city was first built, a white deer appeared and left a flower it carried in its mouth on the city wall, before disappearing into the clouds.

Isle of Poetry and Scholars' Landmarks

In ancient and modern times alike, Jiangxin (Middle of the River) Island on the Oujiang River has been a peaceful respite from busy city life. It has been referred to as "Oujiang River Penglai" for more than 1,600 years. Since the Eastern Jin Dynasty (317—420), the island has been honoured in many poems, hence its other name, "Isle of Poetry".

On our first day, I boarded the ferry at the Jiangnan shore and within five minutes arrived at the island's jetty. Heading left, I walked some 100 metres to reach Jiangxin Temple. Constructed more than 800 years ago during the Southern Song Dynasty (1127—1279), the sacred building is one of the top 10 Buddhist temples in ancient China.

From across the river two towers are visible, one on the eastern and one on the western side of the island, resembling a pair of smokestacks on a huge

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cruise liner. Long ago, passing ships would know they were near Wenzhou when the towers came into view. At night lights were kept burning in the towers to help vessels find their way. In 1997, they were designated "heritage light towers" by an international sea-marker organization. When I saw the east tower for the first time, I was perplexed by its flat top. Had it been struck by lightning or bombed during the war? Then the tour guide explained the humiliating history of the "headless" tower.

The east tower was first built in the late Tang Dynasty, but it has retained its original six-sided, seven-storied structure through several renovations. By 1876, during the Qing Dynasty, Britain had forced China to sign the "Yantai Agreement", which named Wenzhou as a commercial port. Soon after, the British established a consulate in the east tower. In 1894, the British claimed the consulate's safety was being compromised by tourists climbing the tower and ordered the Wenzhou government to remove its eaves, covered corridors and wooden staircase, as well as the top of the tower. Another theory on the tower's "beheading" is that the noise and droppings of birds nesting in the top of the tower annoyed the British.

Rare Waterfall in Wencho

On the morning of the second day, we drove towards Bai Zhang Ji (Thousand-foot Waterfall). The winding mountain roads became enshrouded in mist soon after we left town, with the sun reappearing only once we reached the mountaintop. Surprisingly, the soaring peaks disappeared; we were on the flat expanse atop Nan Tian (Southern Field) Mountain. We were making our way back down the mountain along the narrow path when all of a sudden we encountered deep canyons that rendered the already restricted path even more perilous. We could hear the sound of rushing water, but saw nothing. Then, as we edged around a huge rock, a waterfall appeared — Bai Zhang Ji. Though just 30 metres wide, it cascades some 207 metres, which makes it rare among China's waterfalls. As the sun shone on the falling water, a fine mist permeated the entire valley and a brilliant rainbow hung in the air for several minutes.

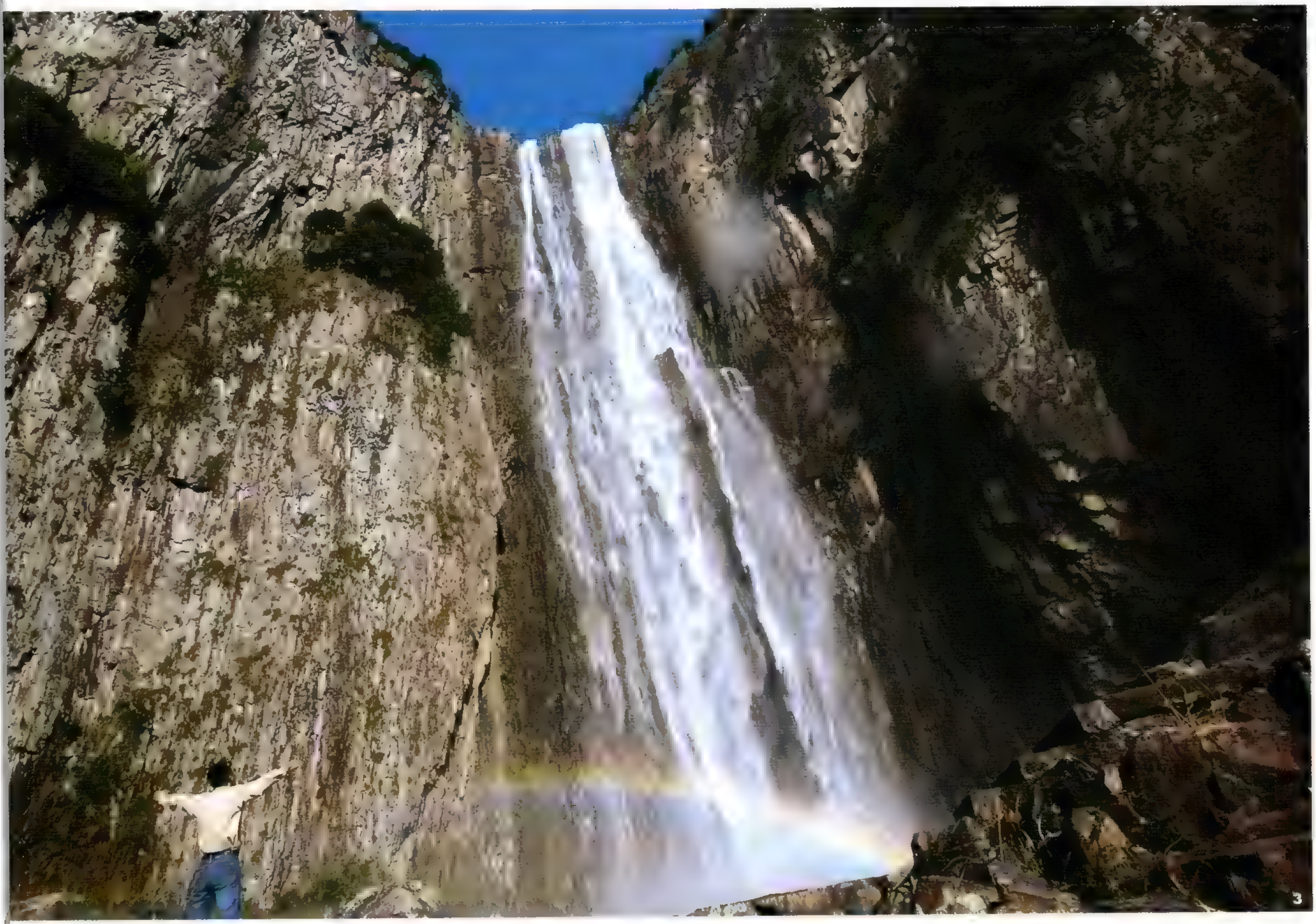
A smaller waterfall lies about a kilometre below Bai Zhang Ji. Er Ji may be a mere 68 metres tall, not even a third of the height of its parent, but a huge cave stands behind its curtain of water. Visitors can enter it to look back out through the water and mist.

Another kilometre down the stone steps stands a

1. A charming stone walkway across an ancient village's creek

2. Taishun has up to 1,000 bridges large and small, most of them covered (by Xie Guanghui)

3. Bai Zhang Ji waterfall cascades from sheer cliffs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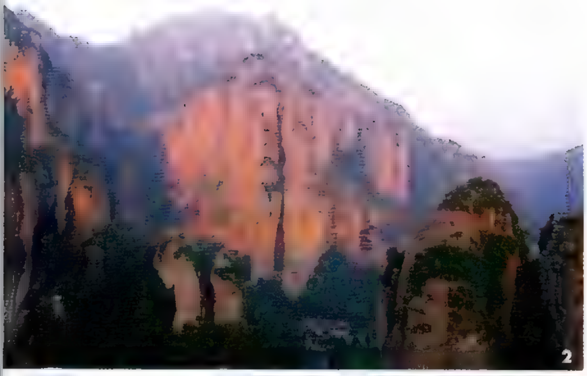
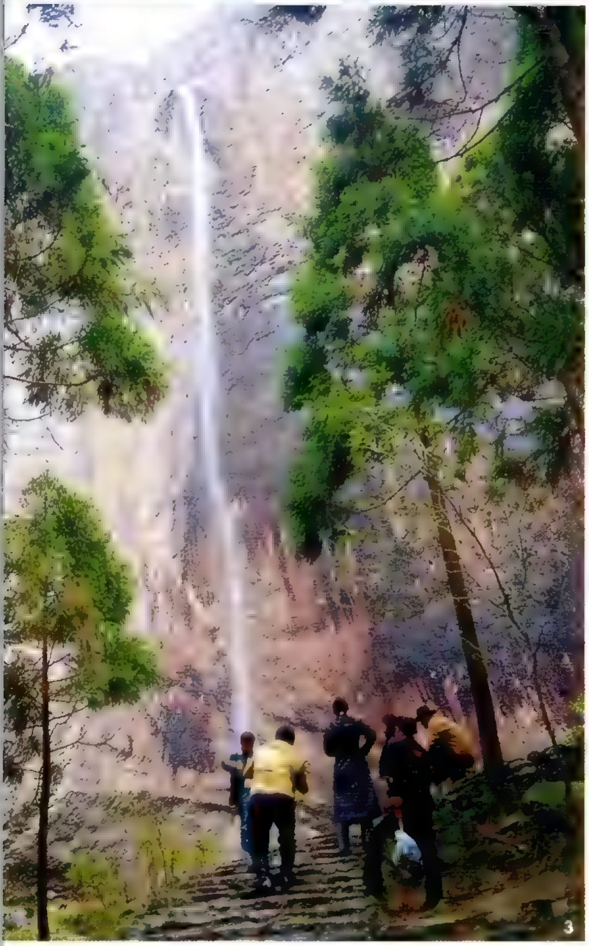




third waterfall. Because of the mountaintop lake's lack of water in recent years, this formerly 30-metre wide waterfall now measures less than 10 metres across.

Wu Yang Village on Nan Tian Mountain, meanwhile, introduces tourists to the area's history.

Taishun: Home of Covered Bridges

The journey from Wenzhou to Taishun is arduous and mountainous; the closer to Taishun, the more treacherous the roads, hence the frequency of bridges. Taishun is so famous for its bridges, especially the timber covered ones, that the town is practically a living museum of the structures. I met an elderly photography buff in Taishun who loved taking pictures of the bridges and knew each one intimately. He said Taishun's many rivers and mountains had forced the people to build bridges just so they could get around more easily. Twenty years ago Taishun was home to about 1,000 bridges, most of them covered. But the town's most famous bridges are those dating from the Ming and Qing dynasties. The old man also stressed that we must visit the "Xiandong Arched Bridge" in Liuzhai Village.

We were not disappointed — the bridge at Liuzhai not only had a house built on it, but also had rooms to the left and right, just like a quadrangle. Moreover, it was two storeys tall! Some other covered bridges had altars to the Goddess of Mercy or statues of gods that guard gateways or gods of tea. Villagers often meet on the bridges to chat, play chess, perform folk opera music, or even sell produce.

Villages of Scholarly Farmers

The Nanxi River, situated within the county of Yongjia, is perhaps the most cultural and poetic aspect of Wenzhou. Visitors are impressed by the beautiful Nanxi's crystal clear waters, lush woods, and the gorgeous mountains that accentuate the river's splendour. Equally charming are the many ancient villages, famous for their scholarly farmers, found along the middle and upper parts of the river.

Each ancient village is distinctly different from the next. When I first visited Yongjia 10 years ago, only two old villages — Cang Po and Fu Rong — were open to the public; Yantou and Pengxi were still in their natural states of disarray. Now, eight or nine ancient villages are open, all of them neatly presented with their original charm intact.

I love the rustic feel and leisurely pace of Yantou Village. Long and winding Lishui Street used to be a waterside produce market, but the hustle and bustle of business has been moved to nearby Yantou Town, leaving the pavilion to more leisurely pursuits. Cross the stone bridge from the street to reach the garden area filled with meandering creeks and small bridges, pavilions, ancestral halls, ancient theatre houses and well-hidden libraries.

Upon leaving Yantou Village, walk past the popular Taogong Cave to arrive at Daitou Ancient Village. Daitou was built down the side of a slope with its back to the ochre cliffs of Jiuluo Mountain. Though just another mountain village, the simple yet elegant structures belie its rural beginnings. It takes up to eight people with outstretched arms to surround its centuries-old camphor tree, while the well-laid river rock paths evoke such harmony with nature that I was tempted to extend my stay by a few weeks.

After reluctantly bidding farewell to Daitou, I walked from Xiaonan Creek to Danan Creek, and then headed north up the river to Xijiang Village.

1. Guanyin Cave Buddhist Temple sits snugly within a rock fissure (by Xie Guanghui)

2. Ling Feng (Soul Peak) on Yandang Mountain — Guanyin Cave Buddhist Temple and a Taoist monastery as seen from afar (by Xie Guanghui)

3. The 197-metre tall Dalongqiu Waterfall

Xijiang is also called Hexi or "Joining River" because the Yantan Creek joins the Nanxi River there. The village used to belong to the Dai family, which can trace its roots back to the Northern Song Dynasty. During the Southern Song Dynasty, Xikou Village became famous for its families and generations of degreed scholars, such as Dai Meng and Dai Dong.

Past Xikou, I walked along Yantan Creek for two kilometres to reach Yubei Village. Yubei is even older than Xikou and was founded by the Xu family during the Tang Dynasty. By the early Southern Song Dynasty, the Wang Yingchang brothers, who were government officials, had fled Jiangxi Province to Yubei Village to avoid persecution by the traitor Qinkuai. This tiny hamlet has produced many scholarly talents ever since, including one top scholar and eight degreed scholars. Yubei is a typical mountain village, except that it is surrounded by two layers of stone walls containing a moat. It also has nine village gates. There are seven ancestral halls for the Xu and Wang families, of which the Wangs' Shangshu Hall is the most prominent. With more than 30 well-preserved ancient residences and over 40 square courtyards, Yubei Village is a serene utopia equally perfect for working one's mind or working the land.

Yandang Mountain, Nature's Masterpiece

In perfect contrast to the prettiness of the ancient villages along the Nanxi River stand the wondrous peaks and old temples of Yandang Mountain. The two are divided by the Yandang mountain range, which was formed 120 million years ago. Its topography is typical of an ancient volcano. For tourism purposes, it is divided into three sections — the southern, central and northern — the largest of which, northern Yandang, has the best sights. When people talk about Yandang Mountain, they are usually referring to the northern area.

The Ling Feng scenic area is a natural entry point to Yandang Mountain, as well as the name for the entire valley. The valley is a visual feast; it is impossible not to be blown away by the astonishing peaks and oddly shaped rocks as you walk through it. No wonder people have given them such descriptive names: Hezhang Feng (Closed Palms Peak), Yingke Seng (Welcoming Monk), Tianguan Feng (Heaven's Crown Peak), Ling Feng (Soul Peak),

1. The Nanxi River's central attraction is Shizi Yan, or "Lion Rock"

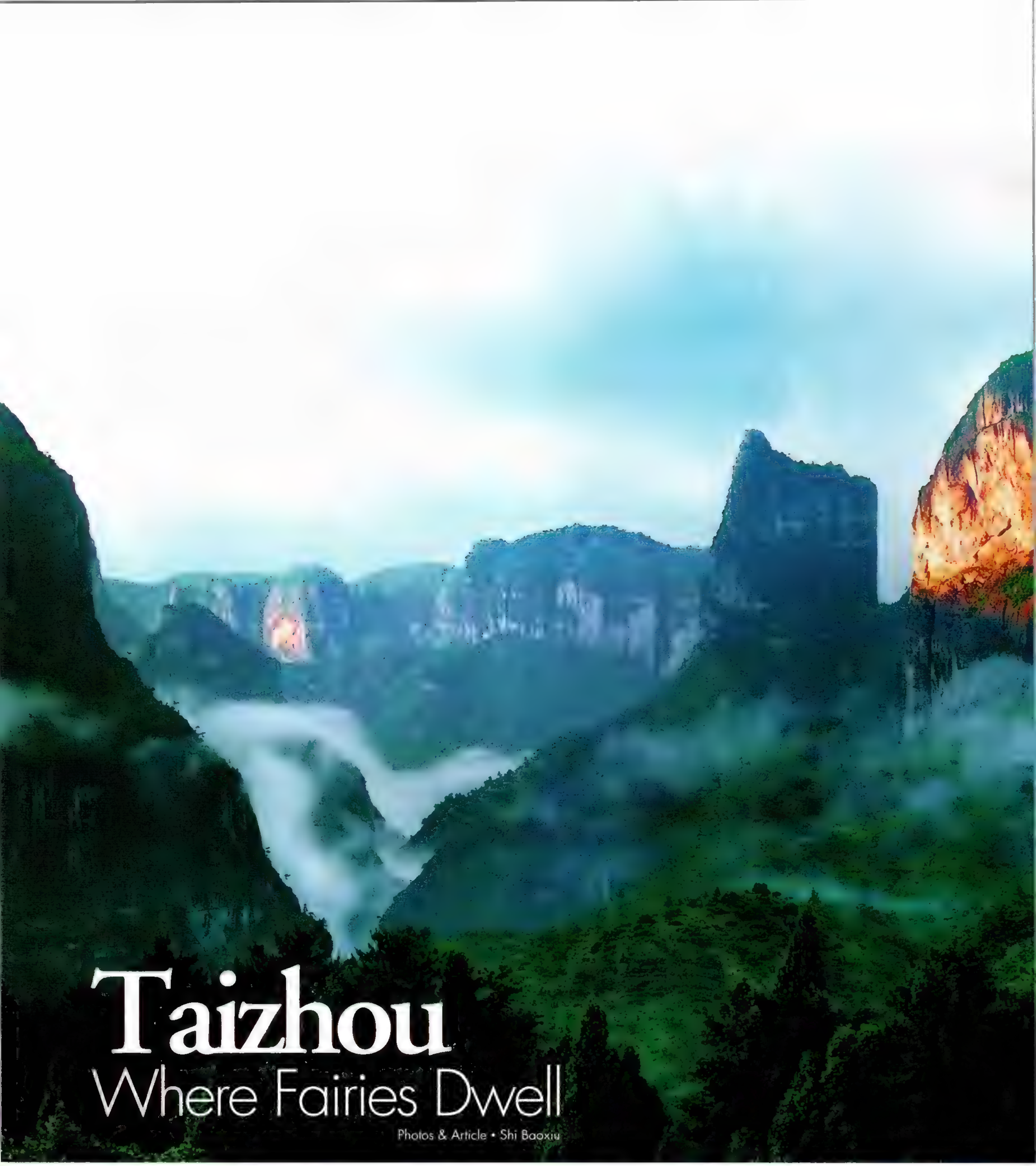
2. Yantou Village's Lishui Street was once a bustling commercial thoroughfare on the Nanxi River (by Xie Guanghui)

Yitian Feng (Heaven-Leaning Peak), Shuang Ru Feng (Double Bosom Peak) and so on. But if you try to match things up carefully, you will find there are more names than there are peaks. This is because many of the peaks look different from different angles, so additional names were bestowed. For example, "Closed Palms Peak" and "Double Bosom Peak" refer to different angles of Ling Feng and Yitian Feng, respectively.

In China, wherever there are fantastic mountains, Taoists and Buddhists will build temples. Yandang Mountain is no exception. Guanyin Cave Temple, the "No.1 Cave in Yandang", is found in Hezhang Feng, a crevasse between Ling Feng and Yitian Feng. The stone cave is 113 metres tall, 76 metres deep and 14 metres wide in places. Ancient Chinese built a 10-storey temple within the cave, which pays homage to the Rulai and Guanyin Buddhas and the 18 arhats. Incense and candles burn brightly in the well-patronized temple all year round. On the way to Dalongqiu, the Lingyan temple built in the Northern Song Dynasty is one of 18 historic sites on Yandang Mountain. Daily "Flying across Lingyan" performances are held in front of the temple, between Zhanqi Peak and Tianzhu Peak. The performances originate from the medicine-collecting practices of Yandang locals in the past. Foragers climbed the sheer rock faces to gather precious herbs. Their skills were handed down from generation to generation, resulting in an exceptional talent for rock-climbing with the aid of long ropes. The locals no longer need to gather medicinal plants for a living, so the skill is now performed to entertain tourists.

Drive west from the Fangdong scenic area to reach the bottom of Dalongqiu Waterfall, about three kilometres after Cao'an Hill. The waterfall seems to cascade straight from the clouds, with a drop of 197 metres. In early winter, the dry season, a ribbon-thin stream trickles down that is sometimes swept away by the wind so that only a mist reaches the deep pool below. The tour guide said that after a heavy summer downpour, the Dalongqiu is like a raging dragon descending from the heavens, with strong jets of water plunging into the pool and splashing up again for several metres. The wind blows the waterfall into a sheet of drizzle, making it hard to get near without a raincoat and umbrella to avoid being drenched.

Translated by Cheng Lei



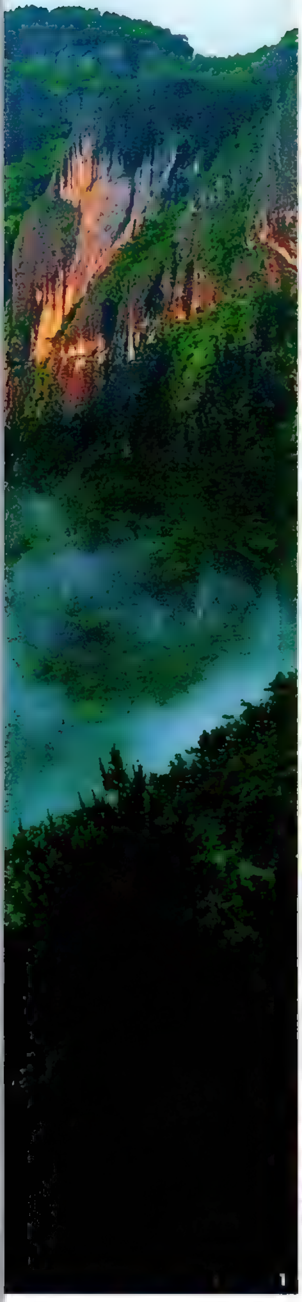
Taizhou

Where Fairies Dwell

Photos & Article • Shi Baoxiu

1. The unspoilt nature of the Xianrenju scenic region is refreshing. The 11-step "Fairy Waterfall" is treasured by the locals (by Xu Xiaofeng)

Inaccessible due to its mountainous terrain, ancient Taizhou took pride in its title, "Famous Mountain by the Sea". The protective stone barrier encircling rugged Mt Taizhou is now called the "Great Wall of Jiangnan". While centuries of mining have hollowed out the hills, Dalu (Big Door) Island has been replenished with lush forest. Meanwhile, secluded Guoqing Temple of the Tiantai School of Buddhism is one of the top four Buddhist shrines in China.



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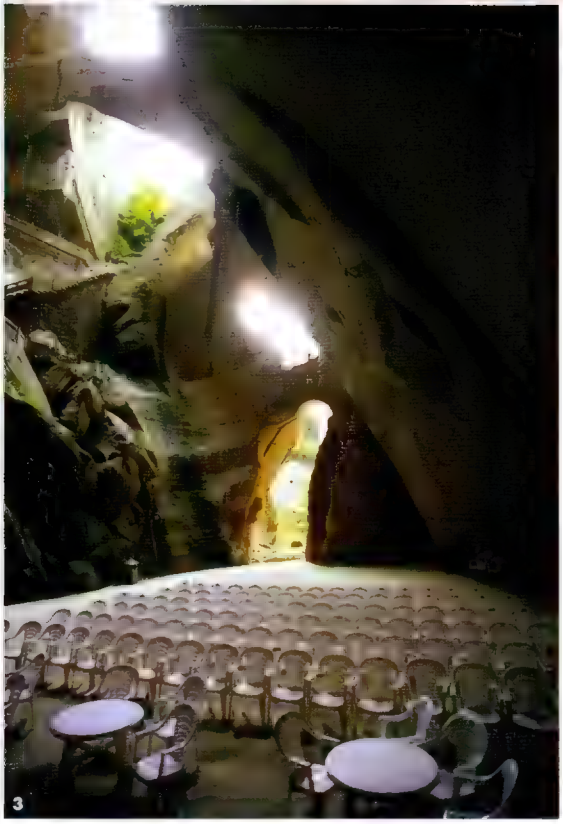

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2. Shitang Township in Wenling welcomes the mainland's first rays of sunlight each morning (by Song Xingguo)

3. Both Western and Chinese orchestras have performed in the "concert hall" in Changyu Cave

After leaving Yan Dan Shan Mountain in Wenzhou, we reached Changyu (Long Island) in just 30 minutes. The former mining centre is found in Wenling, Taizhou city.

Artificial Caves in Guinness Records

As several of Changyu's stony hills were mined over the course of 1,500 years, 28 enormous cave groups and 1,314 grottoes were created over a total area of 5,600,000 cubic metres. In April 1998, the Changyu Caves were recognized by the Guinness World Records committee as the world's largest man-made cave groups. Guanxi Cave, the biggest of these, comprises 10 or more interconnecting chambers that form a huge "palace" covering 1,300, 000 square metres. You could say an entire mountain was moved to make such a cave. A few years ago, after a western orchestra held the first-ever concert in the cave, the space was turned into a permanent concert venue. Ancient Chinese music is now regularly performed there for visitors.

Shitang Town, East End of China

At dawn on the first day of the year 2000, people flocked to Shitang Town in Wenling to witness the first sunrise of the new era over the China mainland. As one of the easternmost points on the coast, Shitang Town catches the country's earliest rays of morning light.

Shitang (Stone Reservoir) is thought to have been separated from the mainland originally. Now part of a peninsula, the former island earned its name from the stone reservoir built there. Shitang's private homes are scattered amongst the stone-cluttered hills, or as the locals like to say, "The houses bite the hill while the hill embraces the houses." Visitors promenade up and down stone alleys, stone streets and stone stairways. Stone houses and smaller buildings dot the landscape, like stray boulders strewn about, reinforcing the sensation of being in a "world of stones".

Gift from the Sea

The island of Yuhuan (literally, Jade Ring) on

1. Shili Street, a merchant street of old, has been renovated

2. Farmers-turned-vendors sell vegetables on Shili Street in the Luqiao District

3. The ancient city walls of coastal Taizhou snake along the mountain ridges

Wenling's southern shore is also a county. A 10-minute ride along the island's northern coast will bring you to a vast seafood farming area. Here fish and shrimp are raised in grids of nets. The fishermen of Yuhuan have converted more than 100,000 acres of bay area into a fish farm. Their homes are on the water. Fish farming has not only increased the earning power of the local residents, but has also made the region more attractive. Many visitors come throughout the year to tour the fish farm and feast at the seafood restaurants.

It takes less than 40 minutes to wend your way north to south across the hills and fields of Yuhuan by car. Then we arrived at Kanmen Harbour on the island's southern tip. The rather shallow harbour is built on coastal rocks and sheltered by stone islets. Though small, the island is charming, formed as it was from rugged coastal reefs. Meanwhile, a recreational resort has been developed on Shipaishan Island. Dalu Island can be reached via the east-bound ferry from the Kanmen pier.

A tree-planting scheme was begun on Dalu Island a few decades ago, transforming it into a "Forest Park on the Sea". Now, every cultivatable inch of land is covered with trees. During a storm, one can take shelter in the forest without feeling the slightest breeze. The thick canopy of leaves also keeps the scorching summer sun well away from hikers. But the island's treeless areas are equally stunning: works by renowned Chinese painter Lui Haisu and calligrapher Sha Menhai have been duplicated and engraved on the coastal reefs. Stone animal sculptures by Professor Hong Shiqing of Zhejiang Chinese Art University also decorate the coast. Having carefully scrutinized the

3

natural rock formations there, the artist chiselled away at key points to reveal delightfully realistic fish, turtles and dolphins. When waves wash over the sculptures, the figures seem to come alive.

Exquisite Glass Carvings of Shujiang

Taizhou is quickly reached via the Wenzhou-Ningbo Highway. The city's administrative centre is located in the Shujiang District. Up-to-date Shujiang is well-known for the Wu Zixiong Glass Art Museum, which houses amazing glass carvings. The carvings are made by grinding a piece of glass on a stone-grinder.

Neighbouring Luqiao District is an ancient merchant town. Renewed and renovated, the area is now occupied by several shops and stores running along Shili Street. Happily, much of the ancient wooden architecture has been preserved.

Coastal "Great Wall of Jiangnan"

After an hour's drive north, we reached a coastal town — an ancient military garrison in Taizhou. Since the West Jun Dynasty, 2,000 years ago, many empires have built city walls for defence purposes. Being right on the eastern seaboard, Taizhou has always been an important outpost. Its proximity to the Lingjiang meant the city wall provided a defence not only against outside attack, but also against flood waters. From the Ming Dynasty (1368—1644), Japanese pirates (*wokou*, or *wako* in Japanese) ravished Chinese coastal and inland settlements. Ancient Taizhou built the Taozhu garrison to combat the marauders and guard against other threats.

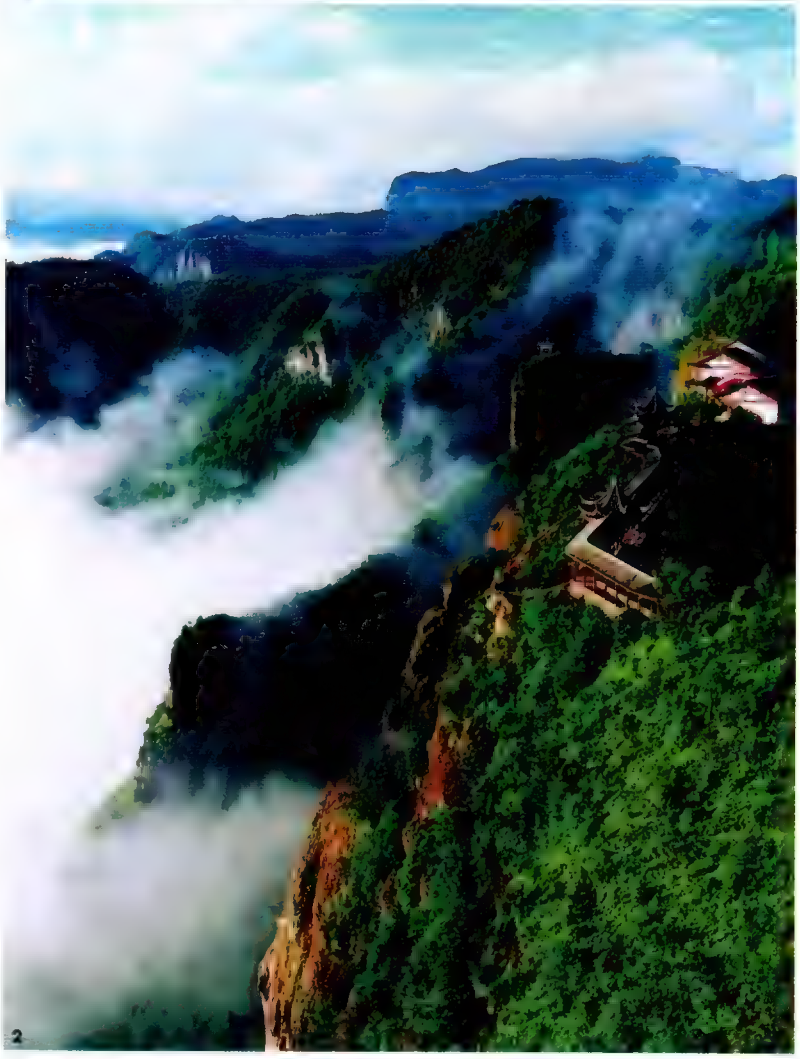
The city wall on the mountain ridges east of the town is strikingly similar to the Badaling section of the Great Wall outside Beijing, resulting in the nickname, the "Great Wall "of Jiangnan. Yanxia Tower overlooks the Lingjiang River from a steep cliff. The oval-shaped wall enclosures parallel to the Lingjiang outside the city gates can help slow the water current during the flood season. Somewhat serendipitously, the architectural features employed to serve both military and flood-prevention functions are also what make the castles, gates, towers and watchtowers of ancient Taizhou town so attractive.

The ancient city wall encompasses the old town region and preserves the 1,000-metre long "Ziyang Ancient Street". The navy used to train at the Donghu (East Lake) embankment in the south part of town, but this is now a recreational garden for the locals.

Outside the east and south gates of ancient Taozhu, towers stand atop rings of city wall. The towers on the east and west sides were built by General Qi Jiguang (1528—1588) in the fight to combat Japanese invaders. Seven beacon towers are also connected to the city's walls. Because the town was originally a military garrison, only one main street runs within the walls. All the other roads are amusingly dainty, winding alleyways.

An Enchanted Mountain

Driving westbound along the coast led us to Mt Guacang and eventually to Xianju (Fairy-dwelling)



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County, so named by the Emperor Zhenzong of the Northern Song Dynasty (960—1127). The Xianju District's scenic area lies about 20 km from the county town. The smooth entrance path to the mountain accommodates both elderly and very young walkers. Immediately, the visitor is enveloped in the deep valleys surrounded by sheer cliffs and awesome mountains. Incredibly, there are no modern buildings or residences in the scenic region. The structures that do exist have been meticulously assembled from small rocks in keeping with the natural environment. But perhaps the most stunning sight of all is a waterfall in Xianju valley that tumbles down 11 "steps", each step bringing you closer to the mist-covered peak. "Fairy

1. The oval structures on the riverside city walls help ease flooding

2. A visitors' platform amid the cliffs of the Xingjing Rock scenic area of Xianju County provides panoramic views

3. The 1,400-year-old Guoqing Temple was built during the Sui Dynasty (by Xie Guanghui)

Embraced by five hills, Guoqing Temple on Mt Tiantai is hidden in the forest (by Xie Guanghui)

Waterfall" is the pride of the locals.

An escalator takes tourists nearly all the way to the top of Jingxing Rock. A short trek leads to the peak and a spectacular viewing platform, a pavilion, towers and even a villa where you can stay overnight. From the platform, visitors can devour breathtaking panoramic views of the valleys. The mist and cloud moving across the mountains is something to behold.

Sui Dynasty Guoqing Temple

Located in the north of Xianju, Tiantai is the northernmost county of Taizhou. The main summit of Mt Tiantai, Huading, falls within the county district. Ming Dynasty traveller Xu Xianke (1587—1641) once compared the "Wonder of Tiantai" to the "Grace of Yellow Mountain". It's easy to see why he made his Tiantai travel log the first chapter of *The Travel Journal of Xu Xianke.*

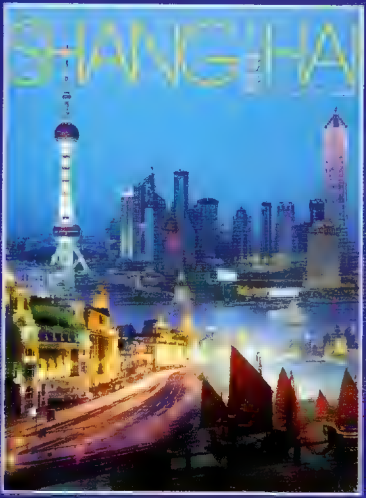
The summit of Huading is covered by indigenous forest. Alluring ribbons of azaleas draped over the forest and dubbed the "Thousand Year Buddhist Tree" burst out in scarlet reds, dazzling pinks, brilliant whites and deep purples every May, decorating the entire summit. In Sanskrit, azaleas are called "Shaluo Tree", while the Tiantai locals call them "Buddhist monks' flowers". There seems to be a Buddhist tie between the ancient azaleas and the old Tiantaizong shrine.

Huading Temple has stood on the summit since the Han Dynasty (206 B.C.). For centuries, this shrine has been inhabited by both Buddhist and Taoist monks. Celebrated ancient poets visited, some leaving behind poems and writings. Buddhist monks in China founded the Tiantai School of Buddhism some 1,400 years ago, and Guoqing Temple was built according to the will and design of a late Buddhist saint. Originally called Tiantai Shrine, it became Guoqing Temple as named by Sui-dynasty Emperor Yangdi (560—618) soon after he ascended the throne. Along with Lingyan Temple in Shandong, Qixia Temple in Jiangsu and Yuquan Temple in Hubei, Guoqing Temple is one of the "Top Four Buddhist Shrines of China".

The temple is hidden deep in the huge ancient forest on Mt Tiantai; you are practically on its doorstep before it comes into view. The entire structure is embraced by five mountains. Its four main chambers are built alongside the slopes, with the remains of the eastern chamber shadowed by a 1,400-year-old plum tree planted during the Sui Dynasty. Despite its age, the tree still blossoms every year. At the rear of the shrine is Guanyin (Goddess of Mercy) Palace. A golden statue of the founder of the Tiantai School is worshipped inside.

Translated by Dora Tsang

BEST SELLER



Shanghai has evolved at an unprecedented speed for decades into the biggest commercial city in China and one of the great metropolises of the world. Favourably located at the mouth of the Yangtse River, Shanghai has a long history and a rich culture. Commercial tower blocks and traditional buildings exude their individual charms simultaneously in the Pudong District, where hundreds of buildings in different styles, old or new, are collectively known as the Exposition of World Architecture. A kaleidoscope of entertainments and festivals of Old Shanghai attracts scores of entrepreneurs and travellers alike. "Touring in Shanghai" takes you deeper into this vibrant city through spectacular photography, along with outlines for more than 10 different kinds of tours including a shopping tour, popular tourist sights, cultural excursions, and more. Practical information summarises accommodations, transport and dining options, and tourist maps are also included. "Touring in Shanghai" is the latest, most comprehensive travel pictorial of Shanghai available in Hong Kong.

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Travel Tips of Southern Zhejiang

Suggested Itineraries (7-day tour)

Day 1: Set out from Hangzhou or Jinhua in early morning and arrive at Xinadu in Jinyun, Lishui. After lunch, go directly to Longquan and visit the sword and porcelain factories. Do some shopping and visit museums. Stay overnight in Longquan.

Day 2: Arriving in Yunhe in early morning and enjoy a boat trip along the Oujiang River. Then go to Jingning and enjoy a meal of the She ethnic people, and watch their traditional performance. At night, arrive in Lishui and stay overnight.

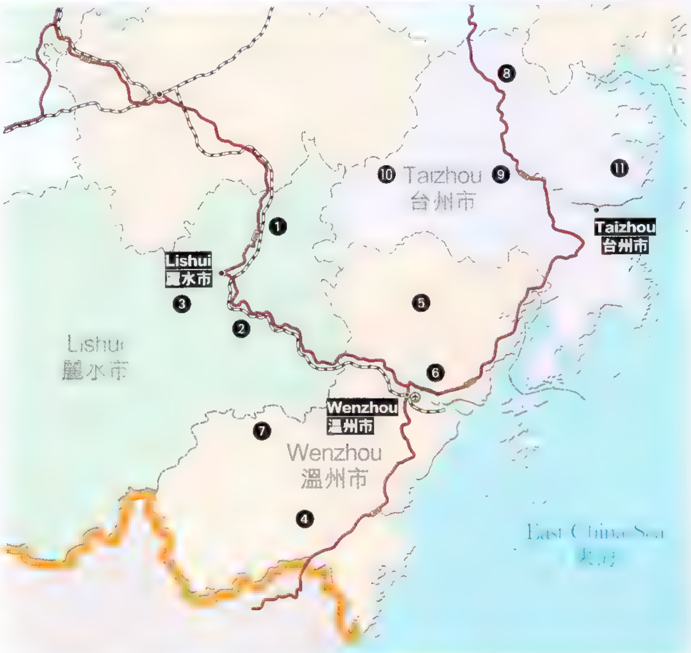
Day 3: Arrive in Qingtian in the morning. See the Qingtian stone carvings. After lunch, enjoy a trip to the Jiangxin (Middle of River) Island of Qujiang River. In the afternoon, reach Bai Zhang Ji waterfall in Wencheng. Stay overnight in Wencheng.

Day 4: In the morning, go sightseeing at the Nanxi River in Yongjia County. Then have lunch in the ancient village. Go to Mt Yandang in the afternoon. After enjoying the major scenic spots, seeing the mountain caves in Wenling, Taizhou. Stay overnight in Linhai.

Day 5: A morning trip to Xiao Xi Hu (Lesser West Lake) and "Great Wall of Jiangnan". At noon, dining and shopping in the ancient street of Ziyang. In the afternoon, explore the ancient city Taozhu and the Fongshan scenic area. Spend another night in Linhai.

Day 6: Arrive in Xianju in the morning. Go to the ancient city of Botan after lunch. Stay overnight in Xianju.

Day 7: In the morning, visit the Guoqing Temple of Tiantai County and then the birthplace of Jigong arhat. Go shopping after lunch. Return to Hangzhou or move on to Ningbo or Shaoxing.



Accommodation

Lishui

- Lishui Sunny Redbud Flower Hotel (3-star)
  Add: 438, Liyang Street, Lishui.
  Tel: (578) 2298 888
- Liancheng Hotel, Lishui (3-star)
  Add: 254 Liyang Street, Lishui
  Tel: (578) 2281 608
- Dongfang Hotel, Lishui (2-star)
  Add: 433 Zhongshan, Lishui
  Tel: (578) 2116 788

Wenzhou

- Overseas Chinese Hotel, Wenzhou (5-star)
  Add: 17 Shenghe Street, Wenzhou
  Tel: (577) 8808 8888
- Wenzhou International Hotel (4-star)
  Add: 1 Renmin Avenue Middle, Wenzhou
  Tel: (577) 8825 1111
- Wenzhou Tiandu Hotel (3-star)
  Add: 99 Xinghai Road, Wenzhou
  Tel: (577) 8550 1888

Taizhou

- New Century Hotel, Taizhou (4-star)
  Add: 458 Donghuan Avenue, Taizhou Economic Development Zone
  Tel: (576) 8586 888
- Smile & Natural International Hotel, Linhai
  Add: 238 Chonghe Street, Linhai.
  Tel: (576) 522 888
- Tiantai Hotel
  Add: near Guoqing Temple, Tiantai
  Tel: (576) 3988 999

Scenic Spots in Lishui

Xiandu Scenic Area

A scenic spot of rocks, mountains, streams, fields and culture. More than 100 marvelous peaks and dozens of amazing mountain caves are found in the area. Some say that the area is of "the Freshness of Guiling, the amazement of Huangshan, the roughness of Huashan."

Getting there: All trains of Jinwen Railway passes and stops at the Jinwen station. You can also take a motor-tricycle at the train station to Dinghufeng which is the best scenic spot of Xiandu. Maximum capacity of tricycle: 4 people. Round trip: 30 yuan. Travelling time: 20 mins

Admission: 85 yuan

Shimendong

Shimendong is composed of Cave Heaven, Prince Sight, Celestial Peach, Shigu Lake as well as Oujiang and Shanlin. It is the 12th of the 36 dongtian amidst Taoist mountains in China. It has many ancient cliff carvings.

Getting there: Take the train from Hangzhou to Laishui. At the Laishui train station, change for Express or Medium coach to Shimendong.

Furong Village near River Nanxi (by Xie Gengrui)

Opening hours: 08:00 ~ 17:00

Admission: 22 yuan

3 Oujiang River

Oujiang is located at the south of Lishui with a length of 388 km. Picturesque scenery is found on the two sides especially the 12 miles from Bihu Baikou village to Taoshan in the countryside of Lishui. Those who love excitement can try rafting in the river.

Getting there: Travel from Hangzhou East Bus Station to Lishui West Station. Then take a medium bus or a taxi.

Rafting hours: 08:00 ~ 17:00

Rafting fee: 40 yuan

[illegible] Fengyangshan, Baishanzu, Xianguhu and Xiangzhuchuang etc.

Jiangxin Temple (by Shi Baoxiu)

Scenic Spots in Wenzhou

Wenzhou is located on the southeastern coastal area in Zhejiang. It is a historic city. In Chunqiu Warring States period, it was already one of the major nine ports in china. Business was prosperous in the area. Almost every household in Wenzhou were doing business. Besides the investments by businessmen from other places, the locals also set up companies everywhere.

Wenzhou has a well established transportation network which offer flights to and from Hong Kong, Beijing, Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Chengdu, Hangzhou and many other major cities. Every day 12 trains run on the Jinwen railway system. In the city, there are six long distance bus station and three country bus stations. More than a thousand bus routes to different destinations are available. The bus services offer more than 130 trans-provincial routes and the number is the largest across the whole China.

4 Yandangshan Scenic Area

Yandangshan is also known as "the Greatest Mount of South East" The mountain are divided into six regions namely Lingfeng, Lingyan, Dalongjiu, Yanhu, Xianshenmen and Sanzhepu. Gorgeous peaks, caves, barriers, waterfalls are found in the area.

Transportation Take a bus from Hangzhou. The bus departs at 07:00 and 14:00 Fare: 85 yuan. Duration: 5 hours

Opening hours: No time limit in the morning. Open till 06:00

Admission: 120 yuan

5 Nanxijiang National Scenic Area

Composed of Nanxijiang culture and village culture. Famous for its beautiful streams, marvellous rock, ancient villages and shore woods. Ruins of Neolithic culture are found in the area. You can also see old towers, bridges, arches and ancient battlefields of the Tang, Song, Yuan and Qing dynasties.

Transportation Take bus No.33 at Wenzhou railway station to the pier in Anlanting. Fare: 1 yuan Then change for ferry to Oujiang north. Fare: 1 yuan. Next take a bus toward Yantou. Fare: 1 yuan. Travelling time: 1 hour. Bus service by modified farming trucks to Shiweiyan are available beside the town bus station. Enter from the rear of Shiweiyan, pass the "Lesser Three Gorges", explore the caves of fairies, see Shiweiyan, via steel-chained bridge, exit at the front gate. It takes about 2.5 hours.

Opening hours: (not specified)

Admission: Shiweiyan 35 yuan, Longpu Xiandong 25 yuan, Longjitan: 25 yuan, ancient Cang Po village 15 yuan, Lishui Street 15 yuan, Fu Rong 15 yuan.

6 Jiangxin Island Park

One of the Four Islets in China. Also known as "Penglai Fairy Isle of Oujiang". Green old trees, hills and streams are everywhere. Poets like Li Po, Tu Fu and Han Yu have been to the Islet.

Transportation. Take bus No. 31 at the Wenzhou Railway Station

Admission: 20 yuan (boat fare included)

7 Bai Zhang Ji Scenic Area

It is composed of two major regions: Baizhangji and Feiwenhu, and divided into five parts: the Gorge Scenic Passage, the Thousand Feet Waterfall, Tianding Lake, the Nine Peaks of Zhuyang and Liu Ji's hometown.

Transport: Bus service to the scenic area is available at the Wencheng County, Wenzhou. It takes about 2 hours.

Opening hours: 24 hours

Admission: 30 yuan

Mt Yandangshan.

Oujiang River (by Shi Baoxiu)

Scenic Spots in Taizhou

8 Tiantaishan Scenic Area

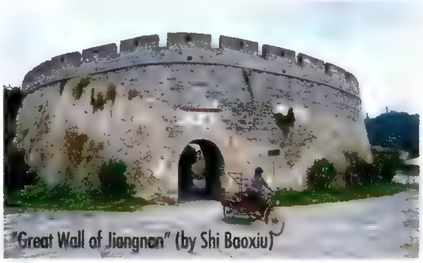
It is the cradle of Buddhist Tintaizhong and Taoist Nanzhong as well as the hometown of the living Buddha Ji Gong. Since the Han Dynasty (206 B.C.), Ge Xuan, Ge Hong and Tao Hongjing were having their meditation exercise and alchemy experiments in Tiantaishan. Tan You also practised sitting in meditation there. Therefore Tiantaishan is also known as the "Holy Mountain of Buddhism".

Transportation: Take the express bus from Hangzhou Station to the Tiantai county. Then take the no.5 bus to Tiantaishan.

Fare: 60 yuan (Guoquingsi 15 yuan, Chichengshan 15 yuan, Baizhangkeng 15 yuan, huadingsi 15 yuan, Qiongtai Xingu 10 yuan, Tiantaishan Buddhist city 10 yuan, Jigong's residence 20 yuan)

9 Linhai's Great Wall of the South

The anicent city of Linhai was first built in the Chun Dynasty and it expanded in the Tang Dynasty. It used to have seven gates and thirteen defense towers. Only Jing Yue, Xing Shan, Zhan Ning, Chaotian Four Gates and Baditian still exist today. The remaining ancient city wall of Linhai is more than 5,000 metres long. It streches from Lanshenmen in the east, winds along the ridges of Guoshan in the north up to Yanxiage, then reaches the cliffs of the east shore of Lingjiang and extends to the west foothill of Jinshan. The northern part is the roughest and it looks Badaleng of Beijing, known as the Badaleng of southern Yangtze River.


"Great Wall of Jiangnan" (by Shi Baoxiu)

Transportation Take the bus to Linhai at Hangzhou bus station and get off at the Lanhai Station. Then take a taxi (4 yuan) to there.

10 Xianju Scenic Zone

The scenic zone is divided into four areas shenxianju, Jingxing, Shisandu, gongmeng and Danjiang and 139 spots. Song philosopher Zhu Xi had been there and exclaimed "The breath of earth all gathers here!" Gaoqian indigenous people reside in the area and 13 mansions of the Ming and Qing dynasties which imitate the Taihedian of the Beijing palace are still there and they all look gorgeous. In addition, nostalgic Po Tan, an ancient merchant town, also preserves its old looks.

Transportaion Take the express bus at the Hangzhou East Station to Xianji Bus Station. Fare: 90 yuan Travelling time: 3 hours. Then take a taxi to the zone at around 10 yuan.

Admission. 50 yuan (tour bus fare 20 yuan not included)

11 Ancient city of Taozhu

Taozhu is an anti-pirate operation base in the Ming Dynasty. It is 1,366 metres long and 4.5 metres in height. Besides the crenallations, the main part of the wall and the three gates (including the enclosure outside the city) are still in good condition. Inside the city, the Ming Qing styles of the streets and alleys remain unchanged. Langjiali, Langdefeng, the Wus Residence, the Lins Residence, the ancestral temple and the Guandi Temple are the landmarks.

Transportation: Set out from Hangzhou East Station. Travel to Linhai by Zhejiang Express and one bus runs every 40 minutes. Then take the bus No. 3 to the scenic spot.

Opening hour 08:00 ~ 17:00

Admission 10 yuan

Other places of interest. Fangshan scenic area, mountain cave gate, Donghu park, Huangyanshi, Chichengshan, ancient town of Shitang, Wenleng.

Longquan porcelain (by Shi Baoxiu)

Specialties:

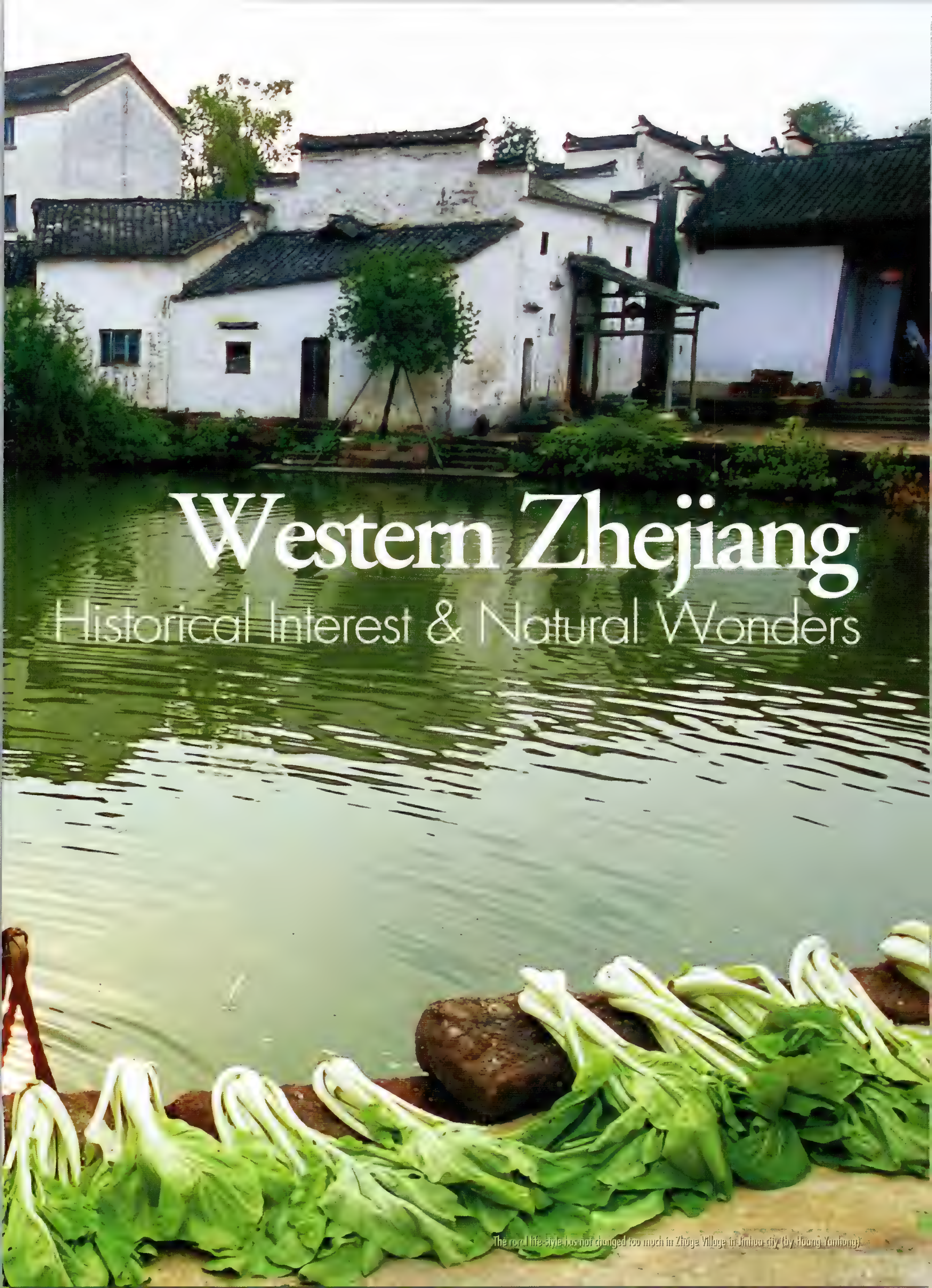
Wenzhou: It is the City of Clothing and the Capital of Shoe Making. The products are diverse, fashionable and affordable. The main streets of the old town centre (Chenjie, Wangmajie, Gongyuanlu) and Wenzhou (Huanglong) trade city are good places for shopping. Wenzhou embroidery, Taishen coloured chopsticks and Huangyang wood sculpture are all artifacts loved by tourists. Wenzhou's tasty snacks include garlic fish skin, Wenzhou fish ball and Ou mandarin.

Lishui: In the Chunqiu Warring States period, the famous sword maker, Ou Yezi cast his three swords, Long Yuan, Tai E and Gong Bu in today's Jianchihu in the Longyuan town, Lishui. Longchuan swords had then become well known across China. Longchuan china, Qingtian stone sculpure and Sui Chang black clay are also many tourists' favourites. Freshwater fish and mushroom are the major foods in Lushui and they taste fresh and light.

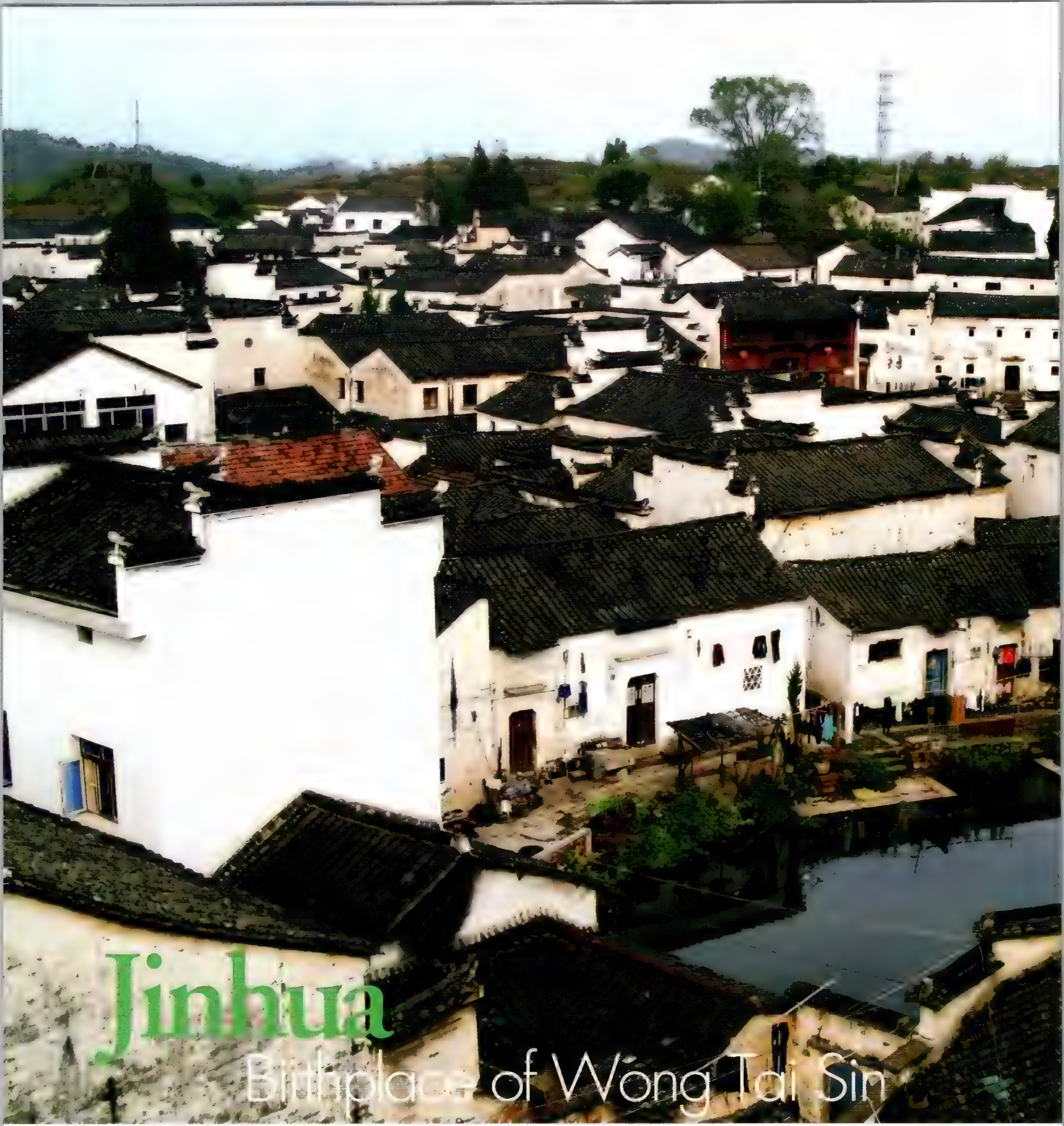
Taizhou: Huangyan embroidered clothes, Xiaonanmen paper fans and Bamboo sculpture are all distinguished artifacts of Taizhou. Tianzhou style snacks include hand made noodles, fish skin wanton, dumpling bun, madarin, navel orange, strawberry tree and loquat.

Western Zhejiang

Historical Interest & Natural Wonders



The rural life-style has not changed too much in Zhuge Village in Jinhua city (by Huang Yanhong)



Jinhua

Birthplace of Wong Tai Sin

Photos & Article • Huang Yahhong

Before I went to Jinhua, my knowledge of the city was limited to its local product, Jinhua ham, and its fame as the place where Huang Da Xian, or Wong Tai Sin, meaning "Immortal Huang", was born. On my first visit, I also discovered it was where the descendants of Zhuge Liang (181—234), an intelligent strategist from the Three Kingdoms Period (220—280), lived. Their ancient village is renowned for its adherence to the Eight Trigrams philosophy.

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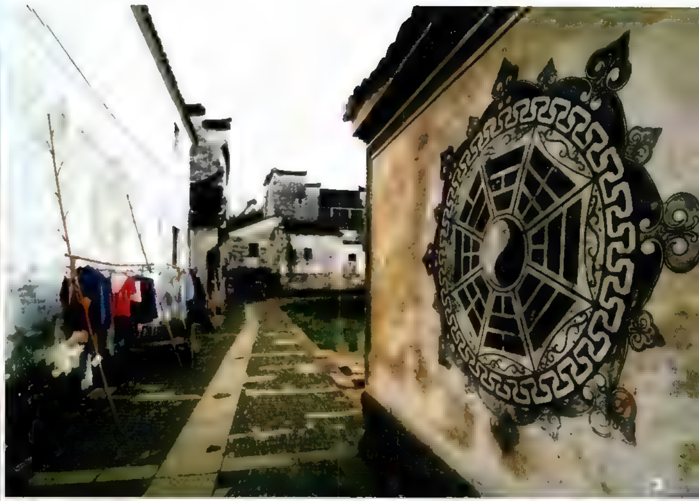
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1. Zhuge Village as viewed from above

2. A mural depicting the Eight Trigrams, the philosophy on which the village is laid out

3. The Temple of Zhuge Liang in Zhuge Village

Zhuge Liang probably never expected his progeny to settle in the former Gaolong, 18 km west of Lanxi, to establish what has become the largest contingent of the Zhuge clan in China.

Upon entering the village, I was deeply impressed by its orderly layout. Looking down from on high, I saw the blocks of still-magnificent old houses. During the later years of the Southern Song Dynasty (1127—1279), Lord Zhuge Dashi, the 27th-generation grandson of Zhuge Liang, moved here and bought up the land with the idea of creating a village in memory of his grandfather. Knowledgeable in architecture and geomancy, he drew up the plans himself, following the layout of the Ba Gua, or Eight Trigrams, including nine palaces. Among the existing 209 houses built during the Ming or Qing dynasties, 18 conference halls, 18 meeting rooms and 18 wells occupy its eight main streets.

Magical Outer and Inner Eight Trigrams

Outside the village stand eight small hills, which form another Eight Trigrams. A villager said that during

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World War II Jinhua averted disaster when the Japanese invaders passed through the area but could not find the village. Zhong Chi, or Bell Pond, is located at the village's centre. Half of the area is covered with water, the other half is land. In each part there is a round well, with the whole resembling a yin-yang symbol. Eight lanes radiate out from Bell Pond in all directions.

This is an intelligent village, thanks to the wisdom passed on by Zhuge Liang. The residents not only inherited their forefathers' classic mansions, but also the ability to explore, preserve and develop their home, as a walk along the lanes proves. Babies' beds are called Zhuge Cradles, the market sells a "Vegetable for Battle", and in the stalls Zhuge Marching Shoes, Zhuge Goose-Feather Fans, Zhuge Lamps and Zhuge Cookies can be purchased. Restaurant menus offer Zhuge buns and Zhuge noodles. In short, Zhuge culture touches every corner of the village.

Zhuge Liang's masterpiece work, *Jie Zi Shu* (Teaching to My Son), is considered an invaluable treasure by his descendants. According to Zhuge, "A gentleman should cultivate himself quietly and develop his morality by living economically. Without a simple life, one does not know his ideal; without quietness, one cannot think clearly about his long-term goal." From generation to generation, Zhuge's descendants have followed this teaching. These words are now visible everywhere in the village.

Morning Tea at 4 a.m.

I spent several pleasant days in the Zhuge Village. The villagers go about their daily business, heading to the fields when the sun rises and coming home at sunset. Their lifestyle has not changed with the development of tourism. At twilight, after the last of the tourists leave, tranquillity returns. Locals gather to wash clothes by the pond, the pounding of their washing clubs echoing crisply in the air.

1. The hall built in honour of Zhuge Qi, the 39th-generation grandson of Zhuge Liang, who passed examinations at the township and higher levels

2. Jinhua is famous for its ham (by Wang Miao)

3. Freshly steamed cakes

4. Elderly villagers rise at 4 am to drink tea and chat before heading to the fields

5. A statue of Wong Tai Sin, the immortal who helps the poor and afflicted(by Xie Guanghiu)

One restaurant owner told me she rises at 2 a.m. every day to prepare her stove, along with many other teahouses and restaurants in the village, and opens for business at 4 a.m. Some of her customers are from the village, others are not. When some senior villagers have trouble sleeping, they come out for tea and a chat while it's still dark.

I decided to join them the next morning and found seven or eight shops already open. Most of the early birds were in their 70s or older. The teahouses were all equipped with the same wooden tables and bamboo chairs. Weak lights gleamed in the steam from teapots and bamboo steamers, punctuating the rural lifestyle. All the shops had their TVs turned on to old Chinese films, Peking Opera or Shaoxing Opera.

By the time I finished my morning tea at 6 a.m., day was breaking. The seniors all stood up to go home and get ready to farm. I found another shop selling steamed cakes. Each of these cakes was decorated with the characters for Wu Zi Deng Ke, meaning "all five sons have passed the imperial examinations", and Zhuang Yuan Ji Di, meaning "to be No. 1 in the imperial examinations". The shop's owner talked to me as he decorated the cakes. "In the past," he said, "women ate such cakes when they got married. Meanwhile, any single young ladies who eat the cakes will soon find a husband." No doubt he uttered the last sentence for the benefit of two women who had entered the shop. They smiled at one other before buying a cake each.

Footsteps of Wong Tai Sin

Like many Hong Kong people, I knew of Wong Tai Sin long before I heard about Jinhua.

The first Wong Tai Sin temple in Hong Kong was built in 1921. Since then, an increasing number of people have begun praying to him. On the eve of each Chinese New Year, his temple in Kowloon is crowded with worshippers and police have to come to help keep order.

My primary aim for my trip to Jinhua was to look for traces of Wong Tai Sin, since this was his where he was born and eventually became an immortal. For thousands of years, Wong Tai Sin has been respected and worshipped for helping treat diseases, punishing evil and rewarding good deeds. The places he frequented have become holy spots. Shibao (Stone Treasure) Cave, where he practiced Taoism at an early age, has been shut up since he left.

Jinhua Temple situated beside Shuanglong (Twin Dragon) Cave was under renovation when I was there, so I could only get a brief look. The Original Temple of Wong Tai Sin is just up the hill. Though not high in terms of altitude, the weather on the hillside is changeable, with frequent cloud cover and mist. When I reached Luhu (Deer Lake), I realized I'd found the source of the foggy conditions. Such meteorological phenomena often appear in places where immortals lived.

The Original Temple of Wong Tai Sin has a long history. First built in the Jin Dynasty (265—420), it was named Chi Song (Red Pine) Temple and recognized as the No. 1 temple in Jiangnan area. The temple compound follows the contour of the slope on which it sits and faces south. A huge screen-wall measuring 18 metres long and 4.8 metres high rises just beyond the gate. The facade features carved pictures of Wong Tai Sin herding sheep and he and his brother in the air, riding a crane and a deer, respectively. Behind the wall stands a three-storey altar composed of the 12 animals that represent the 12 Earthly Branches, the Eight Trigrams and the symbolic picture of the universe. An important venue for Taoist activities, the temple attracts great numbers of followers from all over during temple fair days. There is an air of mystery about the altar: if you stand and speak at the yin side, you will hear strong echoes from all directions, similar to the Echo Wall at the Temple of Heaven in Beijing. A statue of a seated Immortal Huang is enshrined in the grand hall flanked by imitation-bronze root carvings that tell the story of how he learned Taoism 1,000 years ago, along with the 16 stories of his holy visits to Hong Kong.

True Believers Continue Healing

East of Jinhua, Chisong Palace can be seen from afar, in the town of the same name. Stone stairways lead visitors up from the foot of the hill to a solemn and sacred-looking stone archway. The original structure was also built during the Jin Dynasty to mark the place where the immortal was seen flying away. While it has endured many demolitions and renovations, in 1997, with the support of compatriots from Hong Kong and Taiwan, more buildings, including Yuanji Tower and Yuanchen Hall, were constructed behind the Second Immortal's Hall.

Unlike other temples, there is no entry charge here. The name of the immortal is widely used, however, as in the Immortal Huang Supermarket, the Immortal Hotel, the Immortal Vegetarian Restaurant, and so on. There is also a voluntary clinic at the site where, I was told, believers were carrying on the immortal's work. People from Hong Kong and Taiwan have been offering medical services to poor and elderly people here for several years. Their mobile clinic has visited more than 30 townships in Jinhua. Since 2002, they have been working on a plan to treat 300 cataract patients. They have also helped pay school fees for 100 children.

I left the place finally, with a touched heart.

Translated by Gloria Shang

1. Chi Song Temple, covering an area of 1,068 square metres, is the main structure of the Original Temple of Wong Tai Sin

English Edition

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Fantastic Quzhou

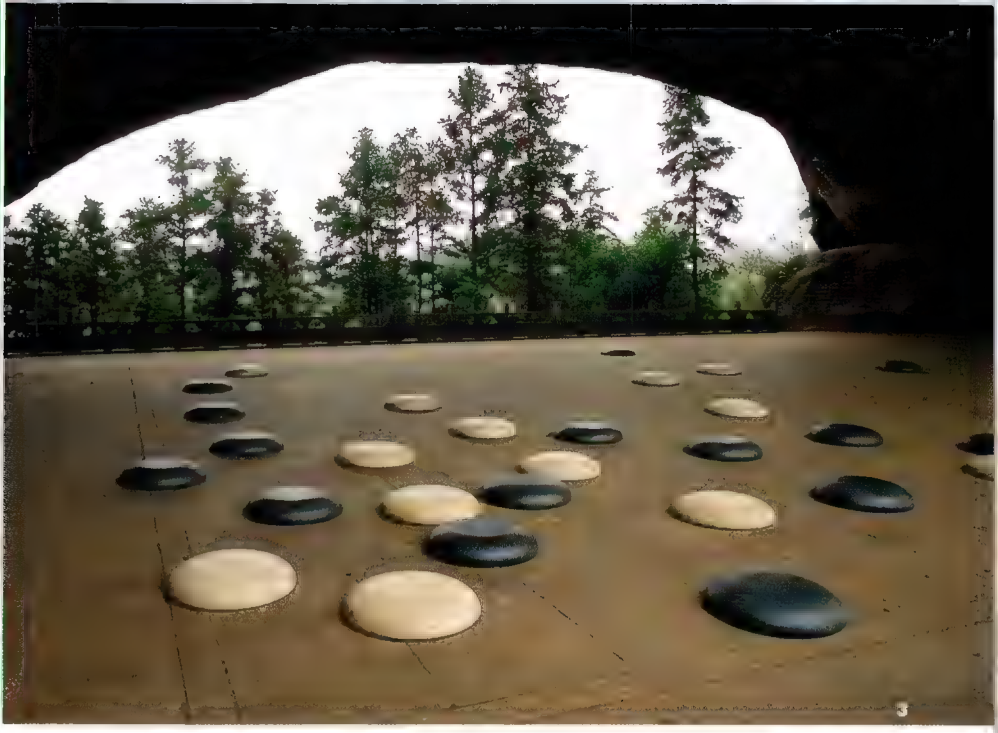
Photos & Article • Huang Yanhong

Though often overused, the word "fantastic" describes Quzhou perfectly. The 1,800-year-old town south of the Yangtze River is rich in tourist attractions, including Qianjiangyuan National Forest Park, Mount Jianglangshan and a stone forest formed 500 million years ago.

Quzhou abounds with stories about the ancient Xian Xia Trail. *Wei qi* (the game also known as Go) originated on Mount Lanke, while the mysterious Longyou Grottoes and the former residence of Dai Li, with is secret passageways, are also found here.

1. A huge underground cave at Longyou Grottoes
2. Beautiful carvings are preserved inside the grottoes
3. Lanke Mountain is the birthplace of *Wei qi*, the game of go

2



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As soon as I arrived in Quzhou, I headed for Mount Lanke where Chinese chess (*wei qi*), or Go, was developed. My first stop on the mountain was Tianshenhqiao, a 13-metre tall natural bridge with a span of more than 40 metres arching over the valley.

The Birthplace of *Wei Qi*

According to legend, sometime during the Jin Dynasty (265—420) the woodcutter Wang Zhi went up the mountain for firewood. There he saw two boys playing chess and stopped to watch. After playing many rounds, the boys left, riding away on two redheaded cranes. Only then did Wang realize he should be getting home. He picked up his axe, but its handle had rotted. When he returned to his village, it was filled with people he did not know. He then discovered he had been away for 100 years. Wang had a revelation. He went back up the mountain to cultivate his spirit and later became an immortal. The mountain was deemed a Taoist land and given the name Lanke, literally meaning "rotten axe handle". Apparently *wei qi* is still called "lanke" in Japan and some Southeast Asian countries.

Directly beneath the Natural Bridge a huge chessboard has been constructed on which sit some two dozen playing pieces, each measuring one metre in diameter. Our tour guide said it was laid out with an unfinished game between two chess masters of ancient times. Mount Lanke has hosted several major international *wei qi* competitions, with such famous players as Nie Weiping and Ma Xiaochun among the participants.

Longyou Grottoes: An Unsolved Mystery

I had been longing to see the grottoes for years. The largest man-made underground project in the world is sometimes referred to as the "Ninth Wonder" (recently, some experts voted the terracotta warriors of the Qin Dynasty discovered in Shaanxi Province as the Eighth Wonder).

In 1992, several farmers from a village near the county seat of Longyou decided to drain the pond outside their homes. A week later, after the water had been completely pumped out, a huge man-made cave was revealed. In the following days, more caves were discovered, each standing about 30 metres tall with 1,000 ~ 3,000 square metres of floor space. In all, 36 stone caves have been found.

The experts and scholars who examined the caves were stumped. After all their investigations, they still haven't figured out the significance of the caves.

Qianjiangyuan: Enhanced by Rain

The source of the Qiantang River, Qianjiangyuan is at its best on a rainy day.

The autumn wind was cool and the scenery was made even more charming by the mist. Clouds banded the mountain's mid-section; the forests had been washed clean. I walked along contented, with crystal-clear water running on one side and steep cliffs on the other. I passed the Lotus Pond and took a trail into the thick woods where a small stream ran riot, tumbling itself into small waterfalls.

At Longshan Shenshui (Dragon's Mountain and Immortal's Water), spring water gushes out of the mountainside. At noon, I stopped at a farmer's house for lunch and feasted on delicious steamed fish, freshly caught from the same stream. I also had my first taste of a Kaihua County specialty — green snails, which only grow in high-quality fresh water.

Lovely Legend, Longer Life

I started climbing Mount Jianglang, 25 km from the urban district of Jiangshan, as soon as I was out of the car. As its name suggests, Hui Xian (Meeting the Immortals) Rock is a gathering place for all immortals. As I climbed, the slope became steeper and steeper. Looking up, I saw three stone peaks rising into the sky like bamboo shoots. The gaps between them are said to the narrowest of all mountain passes in China.

The trio of rocketing peaks is called "The Three Jiang Brothers". It is said that long ago, the three brothers fell in love with the same fairy. When the fairy took leave, they climbed up the mountain to watch her go. Reluctant to turn away, they eventually turned to stone. The path to the top of Langfeng is difficult with more than 3,000 stone steps winding up a steep cliff. Wen Tian (Questioning the Heavens) Pavilion stands at the top, providing a rest stop for exhausted visitors. According to the tour guide, two herbal collectors that made the climb found many rare and precious medicinal herbs growing along the path. The guide also told us that breathing the extraordinarily bracing air would prolong one's life.

Dai Li's Spy-tech Home

Moving from the ethereal to the practical, Jiangshan's bounty stretches to kiwi fruit, white geese, white golden-needle mushrooms and bees.

But one of its most interesting attractions is the home of Dai Li (1887—1946), a leading agent for the Kuomintang. Under his leadership, many Jiangshan locals worked as Chiang Kai-shek's agents, of whom more than 20 held the rank of general and several hundred more were grade officers.

Dai Li's former house still stands in Bao'an Township in Jiangshan City. Though not big or luxurious as might be expected of a high-ranking officer, it does boast a sophisticated security system. The house's structure is complicated, but all of its rooms are interconnected, forming a labyrinth. As an aid to quick escapes, there are also many windows. Dai's study, for example, features four windows and six doorways, though the latter are not all readily visible. Two doors hidden behind the dressing table lead to secret exits. Until they were pointed out to us, we had no idea they were there. Two guard posts stand just inside the door of one of these passageways. We walked down to the basement via the hidden staircase, which could revolve to throw off any pursuer. In the past, an intruder would most likely have been killed upon entering the passage anyway. From the basement one can leave the village through an underground tunnel, if necessary.

A Naturally Strategic Wonder

Back above ground, I decided to visit Xian Xia (Immortal Clouds) Trail, the importance of which I had not previously appreciated.

In 878, the rebel army led by Huang Chao passed through this place on their way to the Tang-dynasty capital of Chang'an (today's Xi'an). As there was no road to follow, Huang's troops got to work and opened one. With the help of the local people, they built the 350 km road.

Today, a stone sculpture of Huang Chao stands at the roadside. According to the locals, this is the original statue made in the Ming Dynasty (1368—1644).

The scenic area features a massive rock inscribed with the characters Luo Ma Qiao, or Horse Dismounting Bridge. In August 1942, a 3,000-strong Japanese battalion were going through the pass towards Fujian Province when they met with the fierce resistance of the Kuomintang soldiers. A Japanese brigade officer arrived to observe the situation, but was shot off his horse, giving the bridge its name.

After passing over the bridge, we walked along the wet and slippery ancient road to reach Xian Xia Trail. Its defensive advantages are immediately apparent. A thousand years of wear has not had

1. Dai Li's former residence is equipped with many secret passages

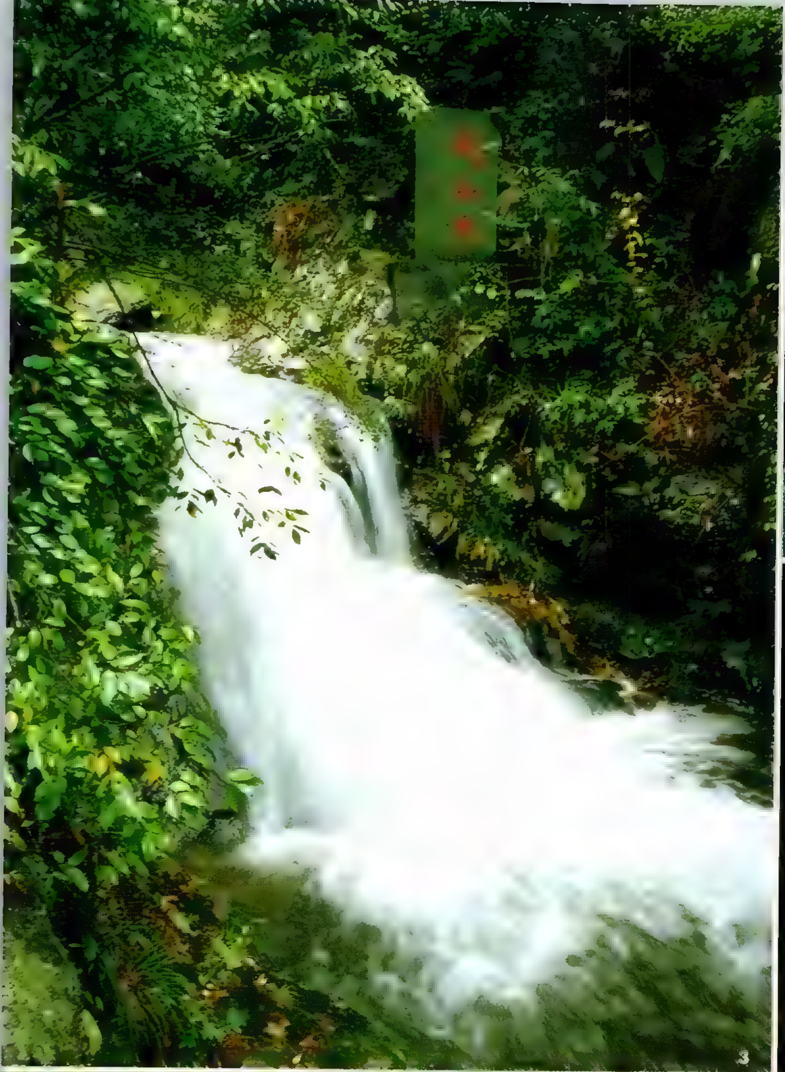
2. Jianglong Mountain viewed from a distance (by Ren Qong)

3. The source of the Qiantang River is in a vast primeval forest

4. Fantastic rocks in the Sanqu Stone Forest in Changshan County (courtesy of the Changshan County Tourism Bureau)

5. A reproduction of an ancient business district houses new shops inside the old city gate of Quzhou

6. The ancient road known as Dragon's Gate on Heaven's Spine is about 30 km from Quzhou (by Jin Quanping)



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much effect on the pass, which is still in good condition. All four passes along the ancient road were built in 1172 during the Qiandao reign of the Southern Song Dynasty (1127—1279).

I was told that the ancient town of Ershibadu, or The 28th Settlement, could be reached along this path, and eventually Fujian Province, too. In the past, this was the only road from Zhejiang to Fujian, so many famous historical figures, including Tang-dynasty poets Lu You and Xin Qiji, Song-dynasty philosopher and educator Zhu Xi, and Zheng Chenggong, a Ming-dynasty general, would have left their footprints along it.

Ancient Dialects of The 28th Settlement

Ershibadu came into being after the opening of the old road. Its residents' ancestors included the offspring of Huang Chao's soldiers and descendants of pass guards or of merchants that travelled through during various eras. In the Song Dynasty, 12 townships were established under the jurisdiction of Jiangshan City, with 44 settlements in each. The 28th of these is quite sensibly called The 28th Settlement. We walked on the town's stone-paved road, impressed by the large houses on either side. Their exquisitely carved bricks reveal the status of their former owners.

The town is special in several respects. Among the more than 3,000 residents are 140 surnames. Meanwhile, 13 different dialects are spoken here, each of which bears traces of classical Chinese. For example, for the word "say", they use yue, which can only be found in classic essays and poems.

Translated by Gloria Shang

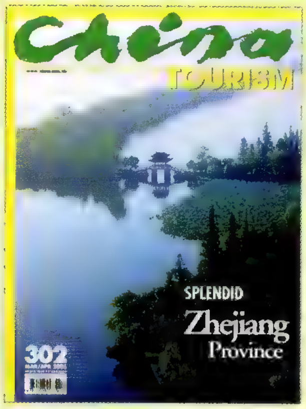
1. Xian Xia Trail has witnessed much of the history of the past 1,000 years

2. Imposing Xian Xia Trail

3. Mansions in Ershibadu (by Ren Qing)

1

3



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Please give your evaluation of the stories in this issue and your overall impression of *China Tourism.*

	Excellent	Good	Average	Fair	Poor
Feature: Splendid Zhejiang Province (Hangzhou, north route, east route, south route, west route)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Discoveries: The Fate of 18 Tang Mausoleums in Shaanxi	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
A Nation's Tale: Post Office on Horseback	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Excellent	Good	Average	Fair	Poor
Photographs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cover	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Articles	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
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Travel Tips of Western Zhejiang

Recommended Itineraries

Jinhua

Day 1: Leave Hangzhou in the morning and arrive in the Zhuge Village after an hour's drive. Go to Lanxi to see the home village Immortal Huang in the afternoon and stay for the night in Jinhua.

Day 2: Visit the Shuanglong Scenic Area and the Jinhua Temple in the morning; go to see the Original Temple of Immortal Huang and the Chisong Temple on Jinhua Mountain in the afternoon. Return to Jinhua for the night.

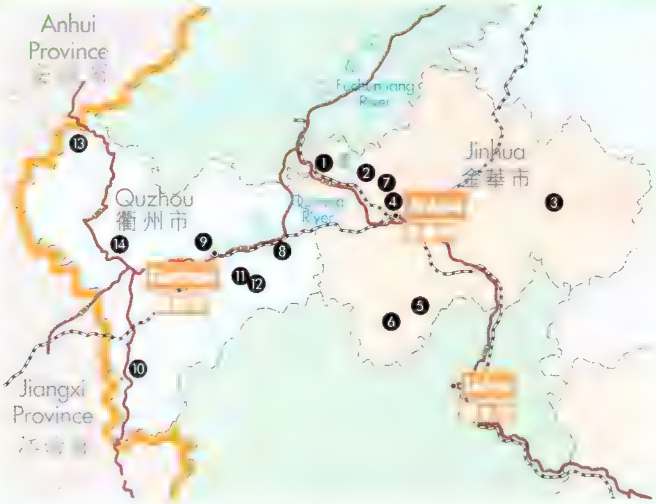
Day 3: Visit Yuyuan Village to see its star symbols in the morning and Guocun Village with ancient ecology in the afternoon. Stay in the village for the night.

Day 4: Go to the Fangyan (Square Rock) Scenic Area in the morning and the Hengdian Film and TV Studio in the afternoon. Driving back to Hangzhou in the evening.

Quzhou

Day 1: It takes three hours to drive from Hangzhou to Quzhou. After arriving there, you can visit the Confucius Temple and the old Quzhou town in the morning. Go to see the Tianji Longmen and Mount Lanke in the afternoon. Stay in Quzhou for the night.

Day 2: Go to Jianglang Mountain in the morning and visit the former residence of Dai Li in the afternoon, staying in Bao'an Township for the night.



Day 3: Visit Xianxia Pass in the morning and the 28th Settlement in the afternoon. Return to Quzhou for the night.

Day 4: Return to Hangzhou after visiting the Longyou Grottoes.

Transportation

Hangzhou — Jinhua

Train: Several scheduled trains leaves Hangzhou for Jinhua; the journey is around three hours.

Bus: Buses leave Hangzhou's South Station from 6:30 to 19:20; there is a service for every 30 ~ 40 minutes; bus fare is 63 yuan.

Hangzhou — Quzhou

Train: Several scheduled trains leaves Hangzhou for Quzhou; the journey is around five hours.

Bus: There is a bus service for every 30 minutes from 6:10 to 19:00; the bus fare is 60 ~ 75 yuan.

Accommodation

Jinhua

Rates: 280 ~ 498 yuan (discount in slack season)

- Jinhua Five Star Hotel (4-star)
  Add: 701 Renmin Road West, Jinhua
  Tel: (579) 2426 666
- Jinhua Wangjiang Hotel (3-star)
  Add: 112 Zhongshan Road, Jinhua
  Tel: (579) 2336 688
- Jinhua Wanghu Holiday Village (3-star)
  Add: Shuanglong Scenic Area, Jinhua
  Tel: (579) 2598 888

Quzhou

Rates: 90 ~ 336 yuan (discount in slack season)

- Quzhou Hotel (4-star)
  Add: 189 Sanqu Road, Quzhou
  Tel: (570) 3081 818
- Youhao Hotel (3-star)
  Add: 105 Shangjie Street, Quzhou
  Tel: (570) 3051 888
- Kecheng Ronghua Hotel
  Add: 47 Hudie Road, Quzhou
  Tel: (570) 2388 088

Scenic Spots in Jinhua

1 Zhuge Diagrams Village

Among the villagers, 3,000-plus of them belong to the Zhuge clan. It is the largest community of the descendants of Zhuge Liang in the country.

Transport: Take Bus No. 1 or No. 8 to the Passenger Centre and change to a special-route bus to the village, which takes about 40 minutes.

Opening hours: 8:00 ~ 16:30　Admission: 40 yuan

2 Home Village of Wong Tai Sin

Immortal Huang has an extensive influence among the overseas Chinese in southeastern Asia. His birthplace is Huangpen in the north of Lanxi City.

Temple of Wong Tai Sin (by Huang Yanhong)

Transport: Special-route buses are available at the Railway Station Square.

Opening hours: 6:00 ~ 18:00　Admission: 5 yuan

3 Hengdian Film and TV Studio

It is the largest film and TV studio in Asia. The Promise directed by Chen Kaige was shot here.

Transport: Go to Yiwu first and take a shuttle bus setting from the Jiangdong Passenger Station to Hendian. Or take an express bus from Hangzhou's South Station; there two bus services in both the morning and afternoon, the

Hengdian Film and TV Studio

earliest at 6:50; the journey is 2.5 hours.
Opening hours: 8:00 ~ 16:30
Admission: Each scenic spot is charged separately; a package ticket for five pots costs 180 yuan.

4 Shuanglong Scenic Area

Shuanglong (Double Dragons) cave is composed of the inner cave and the outer cave. At the entrance, there are the characters "Dong Tian" (Cave Land) in the handwriting of Wu Lin, a Song-dynasty calligraphy. Two stalactites hung on the cave mouth resemble two dragonheads. It's a place worth going.
Transport: Take bus No. 3 at the railway station of Jinhua West.
Opening hours: 7:30 ~ 17:20   Admission: 45 yuan

5 Guodong Village of Ancient Ecology

Its charming scenery is composed of landscapes, ancient trees, old bridges, temples and city walls.
Transport: Medium-sized buses offer services for every 20 minutes at the East Bus Station of Wuyi.
Opening hours: 8:00 ~ 17:00   Admission: 20 yuan

6 Yuyuan Tai Chi & Astrology Village

It is a famous village with a long cultural history, also the country's largest community of the Yu clan.
Transport: Take a medium-sized bus at the county's transportation company.
Admission: 20 yuan

7 Liu Dong (Six Caves) Mountain

This provincial scenic area covers an area of 8.5 sq km. With elegant landscapes, it is described in historical books for its "white clouds, purple glows, surging snow, endless valley and funnel-shaped cave".
Transport: Take a bus to Lanxi at the Hangzhou East Station, and change to Bus No. 1 to the Lanxi Railway Station to take a bus to Dixia Changhe.
Opening hours: 8:00 ~ 16:30   Admission: 45 yuan

🟩 Other tourist attractions: Fangyan Scenic Area, Lu's House in Dongyang, Xianhuashan Mountain Scenic Area, Huaxi (Flower Stream), and Xianpu (Fairy Waterfall) Cave.

Scenic Spots in Quzhou

8 Longyou Grottoes

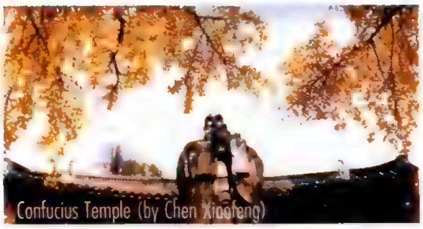
It represents the highest architectural level of underground construction in ancient China, but the project's building time and use remain a mystery.

Longyou Grottoes (by Huang Yanhong)

Transport: Take a train to Longyou at the East Station of Hangzhou. Bus No. 1 will take you to the destination.
Opening hours: 8:00 ~ 16:30   Admission: 50 yuan

9 Confucius Temple

It was a family temple built 700 years ago for worshipping Confucius. It is also called Southern Temple.
Transport: Take bus No. 1 to the stop of Shizi Lukou (mouth of cross road) Station and walk several hundred metres to the east along Xinqiao Street.
Opening hours: 8:00 ~ 20:00   Admission: 10 yuan


Confucius Temple (by Chen Xiaofeng)

10 Jianglang Mountain

It offers typical danxia land formations. The three stone peaks are named Langfeng, Yafeng and Lingfeng respectively. With an 88-degree slope, Langfeng has not yet been conquered by anyone.
Transport: It takes an hour to go from Jiangshan to Jianglang Township by bus; from there you can choose to ride a medium-sized bus or walk into the mountain.
Opening hours: 8:00 ~ 16:30   Admission: 35 yuan

Mt. Jianglang (by Shen Tianfa)

11 Lankeshan Mountain

The mountain's name literally means "rotten axe handle". It comes from the legend about a woodcutter in the Jin Dynasty, who watched a go game played by two boys until 100 years had passed and his axe handle had rotten.
Transport: Take an express train from the East Station of Hangzhou to Quzhou; change to Bus No. 18 to reach Mt Lanke.
Opening hours: 24 hours   Admission: 15 yuan

12 Longmen Gorge Scenic Area

Honoured as the "No. 1 Gorge in Western Zhejiang", the scenic area entertains visitors with charming natural scenes composed of fantastic rocks, caves, crooks, waterfall, forests and clouds. It has 560 species of plants and many rare and protected birds. It's an ideal resort for travelers and holidaymakers.
Transport: Take an express train from Hangzhou's East Station to Quzhou; special-route medium-sized bus would drive you to the scenic area.
Opening hours: 8:00 ~ 17:00   Admission: 20 yuan

The Sanqu Stone Forest Scenic Area (courtesy of the Changshan Tourism Bureau)

13 Sanqu Stone Forest Scenic Area

Trailing plant growing in the stone forest make the scenery for charming. Many of the stones are in vivid images of animals, giving the stone forest a nickname of Stone Zoo.
Transport: Take a bus to Changshan at the West Station of Hangzhou. Buses offered by the scenic area will take you to Sanqu Mountain, fare: 2.5 yuan.
Opening hours: 8:00 ~ 17:00   Admission: 30 yuan

14 Qianjiangyuan National Forest Park

Located at the source of the Qiantangjiang River, it is rich in natural resources. Scientists often come for investigation and research.
Transport: Take a bus from Quzhou to Huangshan and get off at Qixi Town on the border between Anhui and Zhejiang.
Opening hours: 8:00 ~ 17:00   Admission: 30 yuan

The source of the Qiantang River (by Huang Yanhong)

🟩 Other tourist attractions: Dai Li's former residence, Xianxia Pass, Ershibadu and the old town of Quzhou.

Specialties:

Jinhua: Ham, crispy cake and Pan'an tea
Quzhou: Yipinhong tangarine, white goose and Kaihua snails

Jinhua ham (by Huang Yanhong)

Post Office on Horseback

Photos & Article • Zhao Jing

For 20 years, he has been trekking through the mountains in Sichuan accompanied by nothing but his horse and boundless loneliness. The dark tan, deep wrinkles and slightly hunched back indicate a life of hardship for being a horseback postman. Nevertheless, he could feel his pains are worthy whenever seeing the joy on the recipients' faces!

At the juncture of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau and the Yunnan-Guizhou Plateau, lies the Muli Tibetan Autonomous County of Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture. Covering 13,200 sq km with an altitude difference of 4,000 metres within the county, it owns a population of over 120,000. Aside from its county seat, all 29 towns there provide no call service, nor are accessible by roads. Deep in the remote mountainous regions, the only means of communication is the 15 horseback mail delivery routes, the "life palm" of the Muli residents to the outside world. Wang Shunyou and his colleagues trek these very routes day by day all these years.

In 1955, Wang Shunyou's father became one of

Muli's earliest postmen. After 30 years in 1985, Wang Shunyou inherited his father's career when he was 20. Twenty years have passed, he is now already a man of 40.

The Loneliness of a Miao Man

On the horseback mail route, there are tall mountains, dense jungle, rocky crevasses, thin air and snowy peaks. The horse can only carry the mail and the postman has to walk. On the way they have to be on the lookout for wolves, bears and leeches, when they are tired they camp out in tents. Wang Shunyou's route is a treacherous and demanding one. The temperature ranges from -15°C when he climbs over the 4,800-metre high Mount Cha'erwa, to sweltering 40°C when he gets down the mountain to the valley of Yarlungjiang River. Wang has had to fill up on Tibetan zanba (roasted barley flour) cakes when hungry, quench thirst with snow, beat the harsh cold with liquor, which have formed the common afflictions of the horseback postmen: headaches, arthritis, stomach and liver problems.

Each return journey takes at least 14 days, of which six nights must be spent in the mountains. "It is better to be on the road during the day, but when you rest at night you can only hear the wind, the horse's bell and animal sounds. There is no one to talk to, it is frighteningly lonely."

Smiles are the Best Rewards

Over 20 years, Wang Shunyou has spent an average of 24~28 days on the road alone. Each year he delivers 8,400 newspapers, 330 magazines, 840 letters and more than 600 parcels. He has never missed a delivery date, never lost a piece of mail, has a perfectly accurate delivery rate. By now, Wang Shunyou has logged some 260,000 km in the mountainous reaches of Muli.

The return journey from the centre of Muli Tibetan Autonomous County to townships like Baidiao, Sanjiaoya, and Boxiang, is 360 km. On this unusual postal route, there are only sparsely distributed villagers' homes — other than the county government, schools and medical centres. There are no post offices along the way, just Wang Shunyou and the horse. Wang has also voluntarily taken on extra duties beyond delivering the mail: send mail on their behalf, call their kids who are working elsewhere, buy some daily necessities, etc. Wang often pays out of his own pocket for these errands. Wang may not remember exactly how many pieces of mail have passed through his hands, or how many people have received his help over the past two decades, but the people who make the mountains their homes remember everything Wang and his "post office on horseback" have done for them.

In the Muli Tibetan Autonomous County, another dozen postmen traverse these treacherous routes every year, that's why Wang Shunyou's biggest wish is roads can be built in Muli some day, so postmen don't have to climb the mountains with the horse everyday.

Translated by Cheng Lei

5

1. Wang Shunyou and his horse trudge up the mountain

2. Singing is how he beats loneliness en route

3. When addresses are unclear, he consults with villagers in Baidiao Township

4. Wang's wife prepares his belongings carefully

5. Day in, day out on these mail routes mean unimaginable hardships

The Fate of 18 Tang Mausoleums in Shaanxi

Photos & Article • Hu Wugong

After the founding emperor of the Tang Dynasty Li Yuan (566—635) killed his father and took the throne, over the next 300 years the Li family was racked by murder plots and usurpations with grave consequences for the prosperous Tang Dynasty. Today 18 mausoleums remain for the Tang Dynasty emperors in Shaanxi Province, and stand silent witness to the rise and subsequent fall of this most famous of Chinese dynasties.

Xian Ling Mausoleum

Erected for: Li Yuan (Posthumous title: Tang Gaozu)

Location: Yonghe Village, Xumu Township, Sanyuan County, Xianyang City

Li Yuan (566—626) was the first Tang emperor and his ancestral home was located in today's Inner Mongolia. He was a valiant warrior and had helped Sui Dynasty Emperor Yangdi (569—618), a notorious emperor known across Chinese history for his brutality, to pacify many upsurges. By using the forces of a rural uprising, he attacked the Sui capital Chang'an (today's Xi'an) in 617. Li pretended to support Yang You, the grandson of Yangdi, as a puppet emperor with himself as prime minister. When the political situation stabilized, he forced Yang You to abdicate, and established the Tang Dynasty.

Zhao Ling Mausoleum

Erected for: Li Shimin (Posthumous title: Tang Taizong)

Location: Jiuzong Mountain

The second son of Li Yuan, Li Shimin (599—649) murdered both his elder and younger brothers in 626, and forced his father to step down, thus becoming the second Tang emperor. Twenty four years later, he was poisoned to death and buried on Jiuzong Mountain of Liquan County, Shaanxi Province.

Locally called *Tang Wang Ling* (Tang emperor's tomb), Xian Ling is a typical "mound-style" mausoleum. Facing to the south, Xian Ling is surrounded by dense

2

3

cypress trees. Originally it was built on a colossal scale, covering an area of 400 to 500 *mu* (about 83 acres). With over 30 subordinate tombs containing Li Yuan's loyal ministers and royal family members, it is an awesome complex rarely seen among royal mausoleums. Xian Ling is known for the variety of its stone sculptures — rhino, tiger, and a legendary auspicious beast named Zhuan Tian Hou. The three animals are said to have magic powers that enable them to ward off evil.

Local residents had hoped to renovate Xian Ling into a tourist attraction, however Xian Ling is now only reduced to a stone tiger and Zhuan Tian Hou. The stone rhinos and *huabiao* (ornamental pillars carved with dragons and phoenixes erected outside a royal mausoleum or palace) have been long removed. Renovation is but a slim hope.

Li Yuan's son Li Shimin constructed his tomb by taking advantage of a mountain to mark his eternal imperial power and inspire awe in his countrymen. Of the many Tang mausoleums, Zhao Ling is the largest in scale, with the entire Jiuzong Mountain turned into a mausoleum. With Zhao Ling at the centre, 167 small satellite peaks hold the tombs of the ministers, officials, warriors, queens, and concubines, with 57 of the peaks named. In ancient Chinese history, it is a rare that such people could be buried together with the emperor.

Unlike other mausoleums, 14 stone statues of the leaders of the then minority chiefdoms were erected inside the Sima gate located at the foot of Mt Zhengnan, and steles commemorating the sacrifice rituals in subsequent dynasties were also erected within the gate. Unfortunately, today only the pedestals remain of the statues and the steles have collapsed making it impossible to read the script carved into the stone.

The well-known statue group entitled "Six Steeds from the Zhao Ling" was originally placed in the east and the west arcades flanking the "Sima gate"(main entrance). The Six Steeds were the six fine horses of Emperor Li Shimin, who claimed his empire on their backs. Masterpieces of Tang stone sculpture, two of the horse statues Shaluzi and Quanmaoguo were stolen by Americans in 1914 and are now housed in the Museum of Philadelphia University. In 1917, the Americans divided the other four statues into pieces for packing and shipping, but were prevented from recovering all of the pieces. The four reassembled yet seriously damaged steeds were eventually housed in the Shaanxi Provincial Museum.

At the beginning of October, 2002, I revisited Zhao Ling when archaeologists were excavating the Sima gate site. The lower base of the watchtower on either side of the gate was wrapped using blue bricks, and the groundwork of the 20-metre wide tomb passage and the arcades on both sides were covered with three layers of stone bricks stacked one over another in the Tang, the Ming (1368 — 1644), and the Qing (1616—1911) dynasties. The archaeologists told me that the upper two layers were

1. For emperors in ancient Chinese history, the top priority after taking power was to select a mausoleum site. This task was completed by the intellectuals who found a future resting place for the emperor based on their *feng shui* (geomancy) knowledge. The site of Zhao Ling was selected by Li Ji, a renowned military officer and Wei Zheng, a high official who was known for his honest advice to the emperor

2. Village girls sitting underneath a stone horse at the Qian Ling

3. The Ding Ling stone statues were destroyed in the 1950s leaving behind only one solitary stone lion

4. Since April 2003, Qiao Ling has undergone a large-scale renovation. Two groups of opinions have sprung up around the renovation. One side argues that the site should keep its naturally weathered condition; the other side argues the renovation should transform it into a modern tourist spot

laid in the Ming and the Qing dynasties when the Sima gate were renovated, and the bottom layer was laid in the Tang Dynasty. On the back of each Tang brick was a seal or a handprint, which allowed one to trace the brick back to the maker. Quite a few artefacts were found during this excavation, including the broken leg of one of the Six Steeds and several truncated statues of the standing chiefs.

Qian Ling Mausoleum

Erected for: Li Zhi (Posthumous title: Tang Gaozong), Wu Zetian

Location: Mt Liangshan, 80 km northwest of Xi'an

The third Tang emperor Li Zhi (628—683) was enthroned at age 22, and ruled for 35 years. He had a weak personality, and was chronically sick. His weak hold on power opened up the opportunity for his wife Wu Zetian (624—705) to become the only ruling empress in ancient Chinese history. After Wu Zetian assumed power, she named her reign Zhou.

Ding Ling Mausoleum

Erected for: Li Xian (Posthumous title: Tang Zhongzong)

Location: Mt Fenghuang (Phoenix)

Son of Wu Zetian, Li Xian (656—710) became emperor at the age of 28. In less than one year, he was dethroned by his own mother. He was then sent to exile in Fangxian, Hubei Province. Over a decade afterwards, he became emperor again when his mother died from sickness. However, in the fifth year that followed, he was poisoned by his wife Wei and his daughter Princess Anle

Qiao Ling Mausoleum

Erected for: Li Dan (Posthumous title: Tang Yizong)

Location: Jinzhi Mountain, 15 km northwest of Pucheng County

Li Dan (662—716) was Li Xian's elder brother and ruled after his brother was dethroned, however he too was dethroned by Wu Zetian (624—705). After a coup d'etat launched by Li Dan's third son Li Longji (685—761), Li Dan resumed the throne. Two years afterwards, Li Dan stepped down and his son Li Longji took power. Li Dan's example put an end to the record of murder and usurpation within the royal family

Qian Ling is the best preserved among all 18 Tang emperor mausoleums. The inscription on the "Seven-section Stele" was written by Wu Zetian, eulogizing the achievements of her husband and third Tang emperor Li Zhi. On top of the Wuzi (Wordless) Stele are carved eight claws of a dragon in ancient folklore; on the sides of the stele were line engraved with dragons on clouds, signifying the sky-high deeds and merits of the empress. The pillars are octagonal, carved with ornate curly grass patterns; lions and other beasts decorate the pedestals. The stone statues include winged horses and 61 honourable guests of the emperor. The statues of the guests symbolise a period in Tang history in which the kingdoms and chiefdoms of the Western Region paid tribute to the eastern giant, the Tang.

From looking at the exposed site, a long tomb passage and deeply slanted underground palace are visible. Murals on the walls of the tomb passage commonly depict the life of the host of the tomb. Currently, only the murals in the tomb passages of the prince and the princess are open for tourists, while the murals about the host of the tomb are still undiscovered.

Mt Liangshan is composed of three peaks which form a natural facade for Qian Ling. The north peak is the highest and its shape naturally resembles a tomb. The two peaks in the south are lower in height and face each other in an east-west direction. Each of the south peaks is topped by a mound, as if nipples on the

1. The tomb passage of Chong Ling

2. Local farmers harvest wheat nearby an ancient pillar

3. Shima Village where Jian Ling is located is one of the remotest villages in Liquan County. Local villagers once planted apple trees on top of the mausoleum in the hope of improving the local economy

4. A stone statue at Tai Ling

breasts of a woman — hence the local name Nai Tou Shan (Nipple Hills). Viewing the Qian Ling from the Xi'an-Lanzhou Highway looking northwards, one will see that Qian Ling resembles a sleeping woman with prominent breasts. Moreover, the wide tomb passage looks like the abdomen of a woman.

Ding Ling is located in Sanfeng (Three Phoenixes) Village and was erected for Li Xian, the son of Li Zhi and Wu Zetian. Originally Ding Ling had over 50 statues, but they were all destroyed during the Cultural Revolution (1966—1976).

Today, Qiao Ling is a tourist spot, with an area of 825,000 square metres. The scale as well as the stone statues of Qiao Ling are larger than those of the Qian Ling. Another difference is that stone unicorns were erected in Qiao Ling instead of stone horses and

1. Tai Ling is located far away from the bustle of cities, indicating how ancient Chinese valued the natural scenery

the customary stone grave keeper statue, or wengzhong, in Qiao Ling wears different costume. The mausoleum has four gates on the four sides, with a tower at each corner. Over 50 stone statues were erected symmetrically on both sides of the tomb passage.

Hui Mausoleum is located next to Qiao Ling. Hui Mausoleum was erected for Li Xian, elder son of Li Dan. When Li Dan stepped down, the throne should have been passed to the Li Xian according to the rites. Having no interest in being an emperor, Li Xian abdicated the empire in favour of his brother, Li Longji, who became the Xuanzong Emperor. Because Li Xian was first in line to the throne although he self-abdicated, he was granted the funerary rights according to the status of an emperor. Tang Dynasty bricks have been excavated from the mausoleum and some still bear the handprint and seal of their maker.

Tai Ling Mausoleum

Erected for: Li Longji (Posthumous title: Tang Xuanzong)

Location: Mt Jinlu (Golden Grains)

Once ascending the imperial throne, Li Longji began a purge of his wartime adherents. In the meantime, he indulged himself in sensual pleasures, giving free rein to the greedy and the corrupt. In 755 warlord An Lushan who guarded the northern frontier of the country rebelled against the feeble Tang central government. In the history books, the eight-year rebellion is called the Rebellion of An Lushan (?—757) and Shi Siming (?—61, An's officer and successor) Fleeing the capital for his life, Li Longji was forced by his own mutinous soldiers to order his beloved concubine Yang Yuhuan to commit suicide. Li Longji died in 762, five years after abdicating the throne.

Jian Ling Mausoleum

Erected for: Li Heng (Posthumous title: Tang Shuzong)

Location: Shima Village, Liquan County, Xianyang City

Li Heng (711—762) was the third son of Li Longji. He was crowned in Wuling, in the northwest Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, during the Rebellion of An Lushan and Shi Mingshi. With the support of the loyal and capable officer Guo Ziyi (697—781), Li Heng reoccupied the lost capital Chang'an and the east capital Luoyang with the support of Uygur forces. Later when he heard of the news of a coup d'etat plotted by Queen Zhang and the eunuchs he fell ill and died, some say of fright.

Yuan Ling Mausoleum

Erected by: Li Yu (Posthumous title: Tang Daizong)

Location: Mt Tanshan, Lingli Village, Zhuangli Township, Fuping County

Li Yu (726—779) replaced his late father who died of panic and fear, however in contrast to his father Li Yu governed over the empire with a hand of iron and blood. Ironically, he then turned to Buddhism pacifism. However, Li Yu continued to be haunted by Buddhist karmic retribution and died in a bout of melancholy 18 years after he became emperor.

Chong Ling Mausoleum

Erected for: Li Shi (Posthumous title: Tang Dezong)

Location: Mt Cuo'e, northwest of Jingyang County

Li Shi (742—805) was the first son of Li Yu. Reigning for 27 years, he was one of the few emperors in Tang Dynasty who started and ended his reign positively. Like Li Shimin, he was also an ambitious emperor who strived to build a strong nation. His efforts brought stability to the empire and he died an accomplished 64 years old.

Feng Ling Mausoleum

Erected by: Li Song (Posthumous title: Tang Shunzong)

Location: North of Lingqian Village, Caocun Town, Fuping County, Huinan City

Li Song (761—806) was crown prince for 20 years before he was enthroned. However, his rule was debilitated by the murder of his beloved concubine due to a family scandal and the factional struggles between the eunuchs and the court officials. He had a stroke before he ascended the throne, rendering him speechless. In just one year, the eunuchs staged a coup, forcing him to transfer power to Prince Li Chun.

The site of Tai Ling was chosen by Li Longji himself and it was said that he paid his respects to his late father at Qiao Mountain every year after he took power. When he passed by Jinshu Mountain, he always praised the mountain as awesome and lofty and thus chose the place to be his eternal resting place. The name Jin Shu Mountain (literally meaning 'golden grains') is derived from its resemblance to a dustpan able to sweep up all the grains of the world. The tomb passage, 50 metres wide and 500 metres long, is lined with stone grave keepers, lions, horses, and pillars on both sides, which added to the grandeur of the mausoleum. However, some modern signboards erected in the mausoleum clash with the overall ancient atmosphere.

A short distance away to the east of Tai Ling lie a deserted mound hill and a stone stele that reads "Tomb of Gao Lishi" in tribute to the powerful and favoured eunuch. In the 1990s, a new wave of tomb raiders dug out a passage leading into the vault. As the vault was filled with earth, the relics inside were intact. In 1999, it was approved to excavate the tomb, and findings from the tomb include murals, a gold bowl of Gao's, and an epitaph. Gao was born in Guangzhou, grown up in Shaanxi, and died in Hunan. A talented eunuch, he had served four emperors, and was specially favoured by Li Longji. In the ancient Chinese historical record, Gao Lishi was the only eunuch ever to be buried in a tomb accompanying the emperor's.

Jian Ling preserves the largest number of stone men and horses among the Tang mausoleums. Unlike those in other Tang mausoleums, the stone man and horse statues in Jian Ling are of a smaller size. To the left side of each stone horse is a stone man dressed as a soldier leading the reins of the horse. At the southern end of the tomb passage is a pair of winged horses sculpted with incredible skill. Looking sidelong at the winged horses, they stand imposingly; the lifelike statues seem to solidify the last moment of the steeds before they became inanimate.

Yuan Ling is the resting place of Li Yu. It is one of the Tang mausoleums most seriously damaged due to human errors and there are barely any relics left. The remains are but two grassy mounds which form the bases of the watchtowers on either side of the gate of the mausoleum. During the Cultural Revolution, the stone men and horses were smashed because they were considered to be symbols of feudalism. At the gate of a dilapidated building, I discovered a stone grave keeper half buried in the earth, the head gone. He looked like a civilian official.

Chong Ling has a perimeter of 20 km, with a pair of stone lions standing at each of the four gates. The phoenix gate is decorated with an array of objects: 10 pairs of stone men, five pairs of stone horses, one pair of stone ostriches, and one pair of pillars. It is said that the eight pairs of standing men statues represent the guests of the emperor, but the statues unfortunately have been damaged. The broad tomb passage has been converted into farmland.

By Mt Hutou where Feng Ling is located are two adjacent villages, namely Lingqian (Front of the Tomb) and Mapo. At the border of the two villages is a dilapidated stele, with an inscription about Mt Hutou describing the mountain as a crouching tiger. I looked up at the mountain and sure enough the mountain did indeed resemble a crouching tiger raising its head. The stone cliff of the mountain looked like a chain leash on the tiger with one end extending to Mt Jinwen in the rear. Standing at the southern end of the mausoleum, I looked back at Mt Hutou, finding that the tiger became all the more vivid. The slightly swollen tiger nose showed a rectangular cut, which was, according to the villagers, the site where raiders entered the tomb.

Jing Ling Mausoleum

Erected for: Li Chun (Posthumous title: Tang Xianzong)

Location: Shanhe Township, 15 km northeast of Pucheng County, Huinan City

The eldest son of Li Song Li Chun (778—820) was placed on the throne by the eunuch faction thus giving the faction a hold on power. Although during his 16 years on the throne he did not formally take a queen he pursued many lovers In his late years, he began to follow immortality cults which proscribed taking various potions in the belief they could extend life Unfortunately many of the potions were highly toxic and during a bout of sickness he was murdered by eunuchs in his sick bed

Guang Ling Mausoleum

Erected for: Li Heng (Posthumous title: Tang Muzhong)

Location: Mt Raoshan, Xiangcui Village, 10 km northwest of Pucheng County

Li Heng (795—824), the third son of Li Chun, was also placed on the throne by the eunuchs. He was a disabled and dissolute emperor interested only in sensuous pleasures, alchemy and finding the elixir of longevity The short-lived emperor formally took two queens, and had numerous concubines He died of exhaustion and sickness at 30 in the royal palace

Zhuang Ling Mausoleum

Erected for: Li Zhan (Posthumous title: Tang Jingzhong)

Location: Sanyuan County

Li Zhan (809—826) was the eldest son of Li Heng He inherited both the throne and his temperament from his father living in exactly the same way — indulging in drink and sex and pursuing immortality cults. One story about him says that he loved to hunt foxes in the evening with the eunuchs One evening when he returned to the palace after hunting and drinking he was murdered by his trusted eunuchs He was only eighteen

The stone men and horses in the front of the Jing Ling still stand with only a few half-buried in the ground. The tomb passage in front of the mausoleum has been turned into a highway, with the dense traffic of bikes, tractors, and trucks stirring up dust that hangs over the surrounding wheat fields. In the distance, a thick yellow smoke relentlessly spews from the chimneys of a cement factory.

1. The stone men and horses of Jing Ling were relatively well preserved, however a few of them have collapsed. The tomb passage has also transformed into a highway with heavy traffic

2. The obsolete, heavy mausoleums, standing forever for the past contrast sharply with the vigor of rape fields today

1. Father and daughter at harvest

2. The glory of the past is transformed into the ruins of today. Stone pillars lay around the fields in disorder

3. Farmers grow sweet corn in front of a mausoleum

4. A villager leads the writer to the mausoleum. The cracked stele had an inscription by Bi Yuan, a Shaanxi senior official in the Qing Dynasty, entitled "Mausoleum of Tang Xizhong"

According to records, on both sides of the tomb passage of the Guang Ling stood eight pairs of stone men, three stone horses, one pair of stone lions, one pair of huabiao pillars, and one stone stele. Currently the entire Guang Ling retains only two stone lions, the yellow earth remnants of two watchtowers, and three dilapidated stone men (two have collapsed). Local villagers complained that the useless stones in their farming fields were obstacles to their farming and moved them to the sides of the highway. History seems to play a pun in the name of Guang (literally 'honour' or 'empty') Mausoleum. Named more than a millennium ago, the mausoleum is now empty indeed. The honour and solemnity of the past is gone, and the barren place now elicits a sense of oblivion to the thoughtful observer.

Zhuang Ling is a mausoleum covered with an earthen mound. Compared with the mausoleums that involve mountains, it is built on a modest scale. Dotted with dense dark green cypresses, Zhuang Ling is an isolated island in a sea of wheat. In the newly harvested fields in the front of the mausoleum, a number of stone statues were revealed, but none were recovered in a complete state. In 1998, a gang of tomb raiders truncated the heads of five of the stone men and sold them to a Hong Kong buyer, causing a national sensation. The case was soon solved, and two thieves were sentenced to death. Though the crackdown on tomb raiding is intense, this illegal practice remains rampant. Not long ago, it was discovered that another two of the remaining two stone men were missing heads.

Zhang Ling Mausoleum

Erected for: Li Ang (Posthumous title: Tang Wenzong)

Location: Xiling Village, 17 km northwest of Fuping County, Huinan City

Li Ang (809——840) was crowned by eunuchs after they murdered Li Zhan. Li Ang had a genteel personality, and personally attended to the affairs of the empire instead of entrusting them to the eunuchs. He was determined to tighten his grip over the powerful eunuchs. He masterminded the Ganlu Incident, an attempt to kill the leading eunuch however the incident failed. While Li Ang was in captivity, he became a figurehead for loyalists opposed to the eunuch domination of court politics. Finally, Li fell sick and at the age of thirty three he was killed by those who made his name

Duan Ling Mausoleum

Erected for: Li Yan (Posthumous title: Tang Wuzong)

Location: Sanyuan County

Li Yan (814——846) was extremely afraid of death and turned to Taoism and alchemy in the pursuit of immortality. Ironically, instead of making him stronger, overdosing on 'immortal elixirs' made him thin and weak even though he oddly believed that his body was being reshaped. Li Yan finally succumbed to his long-term drug consumption when he died at the age of 33.

Zheng Ling Mausoleum

Erected for: Li Chen (Posthumous title: Tang Xuanzong)

Location: Shitan Village, Baiwang Township, southern ridge of Mt Beizhong, 30 km northwest of Jingyang County, Xianyang City

After witnessing the numerous murders of preceding emperors by the eunuch, Li Chen (810——859) adopted the strategy of playing dumb. The eunuchs, however, realized he would be easy to manipulate and supported him to be emperor. Once he attained the imperial power, he shook off his disguise and soon cracked down on corrupt officials, and made advances in guarding the frontiers of the empire. He regained the Helong area, now Gansu Province, which had been long occupied by warlords. Li Chen revived the prosperity of the Tang dynasty to a degree however, his belief in immortality elixirs lead once again to another emperor's death. He died at fifty.

Looking southward from one end of Xiling Village, I see a sweeping green of corn, sorghum, and other tall crops called "the Green Curtain". With a perimeter of 20 meters, Zhang Ling now lies within the green curtain. Villagers told me that the stone statues that had survived to the modern era unfortunately were destroyed during the Cultural Revolution and other remnants had all been transported to Xi'an. Today, there are no remains of Zhang Ling to be found.

Leaving the village, we headed to the east, and discovered a stone lion crouching on the side of Tianru Mountain. I guessed that it was the stone lion mentioned in writings about Zhang Ling. I remembered also that the writings mentioned that Zhang Ling was also survived by a pair of pillars and a stone man though all dilapidated. However, we could not find them.

Duan Ling is a mound-styled mausoleum, resembling an upside down spoon and covered with cypresses. On both sides of the tomb passage were two stone lions and four stone men (three headless). At the east gate was a pair of stone lions. Local legend says that one stone head could be sold at hundreds of thousand yuan! At the southern end of the tomb passage, the stone winged horses were half buried in the yellow earth. One pillar lay in two halves in the field, and the other stood bleakly in the harvested wheat field. Further south to the pillars was the end of the raised passage, and in the distance was the endless Guanzhong Plain.

Zheng Ling has a perimeter of 60 km, with the inner section covering 600 square metres, in a scale similar to that of Zhao Ling built for the first emperor. The stone men and horses in the mausoleum were preserved in relatively good condition. The 25 statues were smaller in size and less skillfully carved compared with those in the mausoleums for emperors during the prime years of the Tang dynasty. The civilian official on the left and the military officers on the right were carved with thin and feeble faces, as if signifying the end of the Tang.

While the remote locale impoverished the local farmers, it has kept Zheng Ling away from the outside world and today retains a natural appearance despite its neglect by the local government.

Jian Ling Mausoleum

Erected for: Li Cui (Posthumous title: Tang Yizong)

The third son of Li Chen, Li Cui (833—873) loved indulging in sensuous pleasures and thus became an ideal candidate for the throne to the eunuchs. Spending 15 years on the throne, Li Cui lived a life vacillating between worldly merrymaking and Buddhist detachment. His dissolute and empty life ended when he was forty-one.

Jing Ling Mausoleum

Erected for: Li Xuan (Posthumous title: Tang Xizong)

Li Xuan (862—888) was the fifth son of Li Cui, however to solidify support from the eunuch faction he called the eunuch who supported him "Father". In 880 a farmer uprising led by Huang Cao conquered the capital Chang'an, and Li Xuan fled to Sichuan, the richly cultivated basin southwest of Chang'an. He lived in exile for five years. Eventually the farmer forces were defeated, but the Tang Dynasty was almost at its end. Shamelessly indulging in wine, sex, cock fighting, and hunting at a time when the empire was on its deathbed, Li Xuan died at 24 in Chang'an.

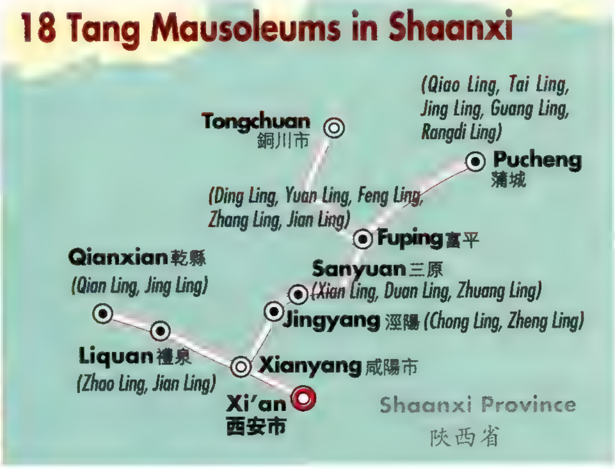
Located in an earthen hill north of Dongrao Village, Changcun Township, Fuping County, Jian Ling features a steep peak in the north, with lower peaks flanking on both sides, in a "north high, south low"topographical layout. It is typical of a Tang mausoleum.

In a rape field, we found the Jian Ling of Li Cui. It was not as large as Feng Ling, and far less stately as Zhao Ling. Indeed, it showed the decline of the once powerful Tang. Currently Jian Ling is survived by two stone horses looking eastwards and a stone grave keeper, all standing dilapidated in the field.

Jing Ling is located in Heibaoyu, now called Taiping Township, over 10 Chinese miles (half a kilometre) north of the Ganxian County seat. As the weakened Tang empire came to an end, the builders of Jian Ling did not attempt to reshape a mountain into a tomb and the entire area of the mausoleum is rather small. It overlooks Qian Ling over a gorge on the east-west axis, yet displays far less grandeur and an unsatisfactory feng shui layout.

The wheat grows tall in the fields, covering the stone horses and the surrounding fields are covered in sweeping waves of wheat and cole. We climb a mountain ridge, and gaze back to the mausoleum. The tomb passage has been transformed into terrace fields, and the headless stone horses lay dormant in the cole fields. It was obvious that the size of the stone horses, about 1.2 metres long, here was much smaller than that of the stone horses in Qian Ling. Moreover, other stone statues are ominously missing.

Translated by Zhang Boli

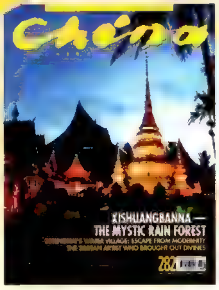

18 Tang Mausoleums in Shaanxi
Tongchuan 銅川市
(Qiao Ling, Tai Ling, Jing Ling, Guang Ling, Rangdi Ling)
Pucheng 蒲城
(Ding Ling, Yuan Ling, Feng Ling, Zhang Ling, Jian Ling)
Fuping 富平
Qianxian 乾縣
(Qian Ling, Jing Ling)
Sanyuan 三原
(Xian Ling, Duan Ling, Zhuang Ling)
Jingyang 涇陽 (Chong Ling, Zheng Ling)
Liquan 禮泉
(Zhao Ling, Jian Ling)
Xianyang 咸陽市
Xi'an 西安市
Shaanxi Province
陝西省

No.281 2003 Dec/2004 Jan

China
FOUR-WHEELED FREEDOM IN SOUTH CHINA
281

- Four-Wheeled Freedom in South China
- Chinese Medusa—The Long-Horned Miao
- Desperate Times at the Yangtze River

No.282 2004 Jan


China
XISHUANGBANNA — THE MYSTIC RAIN FOREST
282

- Xishuangbanna—The Mystic Rain Forest
- Shanghai's Water Village: Escape From Modernity
- The Tibetan Artist Who Brought Out Divines

No.283 2004 Feb

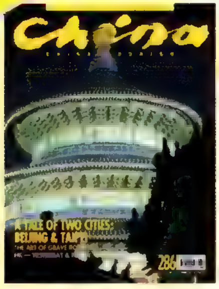
- Time Travel: Ancient Route to Sichuan
- Shanghai's Dream Factories
- Rendezvous with the Four Beauties—Mt. Siguniang

No.284 2004 Mar

China
LEGENDS OF THE TAIHANG MOUNTAINS

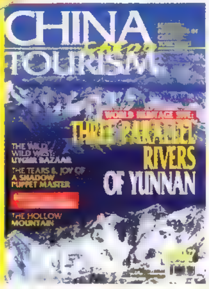
- Legends of the Taihang Mountains
- Chasing the Forestry Trains
- Sleigh Ride Through A Winter Wonderland

No.286 2004 May


China
A TALE OF TWO CITIES: BEIJING & TAIPEI
286

- A Tale of Two Cities: Beijing & Taipei
- The Art of Grave Robbery
- Hong Kong—Yesterday & Today

No.287 2004 Jun


CHINA TOURISM
THREE PARALLEL RIVERS OF YUNNAN

- World Heritage Site: Three Parallel Rivers of Yunnan
- The Wild West: Uygur Bazaar
- The Tears & Joy of A Shadow Puppet Master

No.288 2004 Jul

CHINA TOURISM
288
YANGTZE THREE GORGES

- The Transformed Yangtze Three Gorges
- The Three Dimensional Voyage in Datong
- The Lost Summer Palace: Tuguhun

No.289 2004 Aug

CHINA TOURISM
FORBIDDEN CITY
289

- The Invisible Forbidden City
- The Sorrowful Season of Cotton-Picking
- Fantastic Danxia Landform in Zhangye

No.291 2004 Oct

CHINA TOURISM
MT. GAOLIGONG
291

- Climbing Through the Darkness of Resistance War—Mt. Gaoligong
- Loess Plateau's Blind Storytellers
- Harbin: A Century of Russian Influence

No.292 2004 Nov

CHINA TOURISM
NINE DRAGONS
NIRVANA IN WESTERN SICHUAN
292

- Nine Dragons: Nirvana in Western Sichuan
- Qinchuan Village: Keeping The Legacy Alive
- Nightlife in Changsha

No.293 2004 Dec

CHINA TOURISM
THE AMAZING SOUTHERN GUIZHOU
293

- The Amazing Southern Guizhou
- Russian Performing Artists—"Gold Rush" in China
- World Heritage Site: The Ancient Koguryo Kingdom

No.294 2005 Jan

CHINA TOURISM
GREAT WALL
294

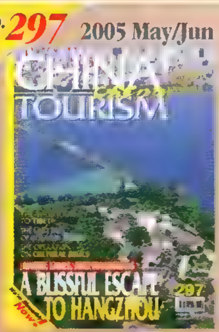
- The Invisible Great Wall
- The First Bend of the Yellow River
- The Song of Forbidden Love—Bashi

No.296 2005 Mar/Apr

CHINA TOURISM
MT. HUANGSHAN
296

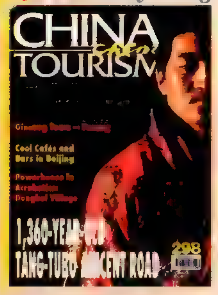
- A Glacial Sea of Clouds: Mt. Huangshan
- The Beer and German Architecture in Qingdao
- The Ancient Battlefield of Wuding River

No.297 2005 May/Jun


CHINA TOURISM
A BLISSFUL ESCAPE TO HANGZHOU
297

- Rivers, Lakes, and Waterways: A Blissful Escape to Hangzhou
- The Wild Journey to Tibet
- The Last Tribe of Gunmen: Basha

No.298 2005 Jul/Aug


CHINA TOURISM
Cool Cafes and Bars in Beijing
1,360-YEAR-OLD TANG-TUBO ANCIENT ROAD
298

- 1,360-Year-Old Tang-Tubo Ancient Road
- Ginseng Town—Fusong
- Cool Cafes and Bars in Beijing

No.299 2005 Sep/Oct

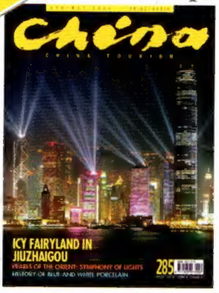
- The 25 Most Wanted Things To Do in China
- Ili: The Journey to Tianshan
- Badan Jilin Desert: A Sea of Golden Silk

China Tourism

Back Issues

(2004 ~ 2005)

No.285 2004 Apr


China
ICY FAIRYLAND IN JIUZHAIGOU
285

- Icy Fairyland in Jiuzhaigou
- Pearls of the Orient: Symphony of Lights
- History of Blue and White Porcelain

No.290 2004 Sep

CHINA TOURISM
ADVENTURE IN THE WILD WEST
290

- Explore the Unexplored: Adventure in the Wild West
- Golfing at the Jade Dragon Snow Mountain
- Wenzhou: The Business Town

No.295 2005 Feb

CHINA TOURISM
HULUNBUIR
295

- The Silver Hulun Buir
- My Fisherman's Life at Erhai Lake
- In Search of Takins

No.300 2005 Nov/Dec

CHINA TOURISM
CHAOZHOU, SHANTOU
300

- Guangdong Twin Cities: Chaozhou, Shantou
- Danba—A Realm of Beauty
- Tongbo Widow's Village

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NEXT ISSUE

FEATURE STORY:

Exploring **Guilin**

Guilin, a hot tourist city of the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region in Southwest China, is proud of its bonsai-like natural landscapes. As a Chinese traveller and not the first time to visit the city, our correspondent still discovers many things and places of interest besides the celebrated westernized Yangshuo Street: ancient towns and villages where people live a undisturbed rural life; time-honoured Lingqu stream which stays charming as a natural scenery and still functions in distributing water to irritate farming fields nowadays; touring the Lijiang River at night, one can enjoy wonderful local performances, and more are waiting for you to explore and enjoy...

DISCOVERIES:

Old Bound-feet Women Tour Beijing

Travellers from all over the world come to Beijing for its ancient sights and modern wonders, but perhaps never has the city welcomed a tourist group as unusual as a recent group of women travellers — for they are all bound feet and have hailed from a retirement home in Baoji County in Binzhou, Shandong Province.

PHOTOGRAPHY:

Aerial Photography of the Plateau

In the end of 2004, one of our correspondents had a trip of aerial photography together with several professional photographers on a huge Russian airfreighter. Flying from Chengdu to Lhasa, their flight passed over the Himalayas glaciers and the Yarlung Zangbo River. All along, the views they rushed towards them like surging tides, imposing and boundless.

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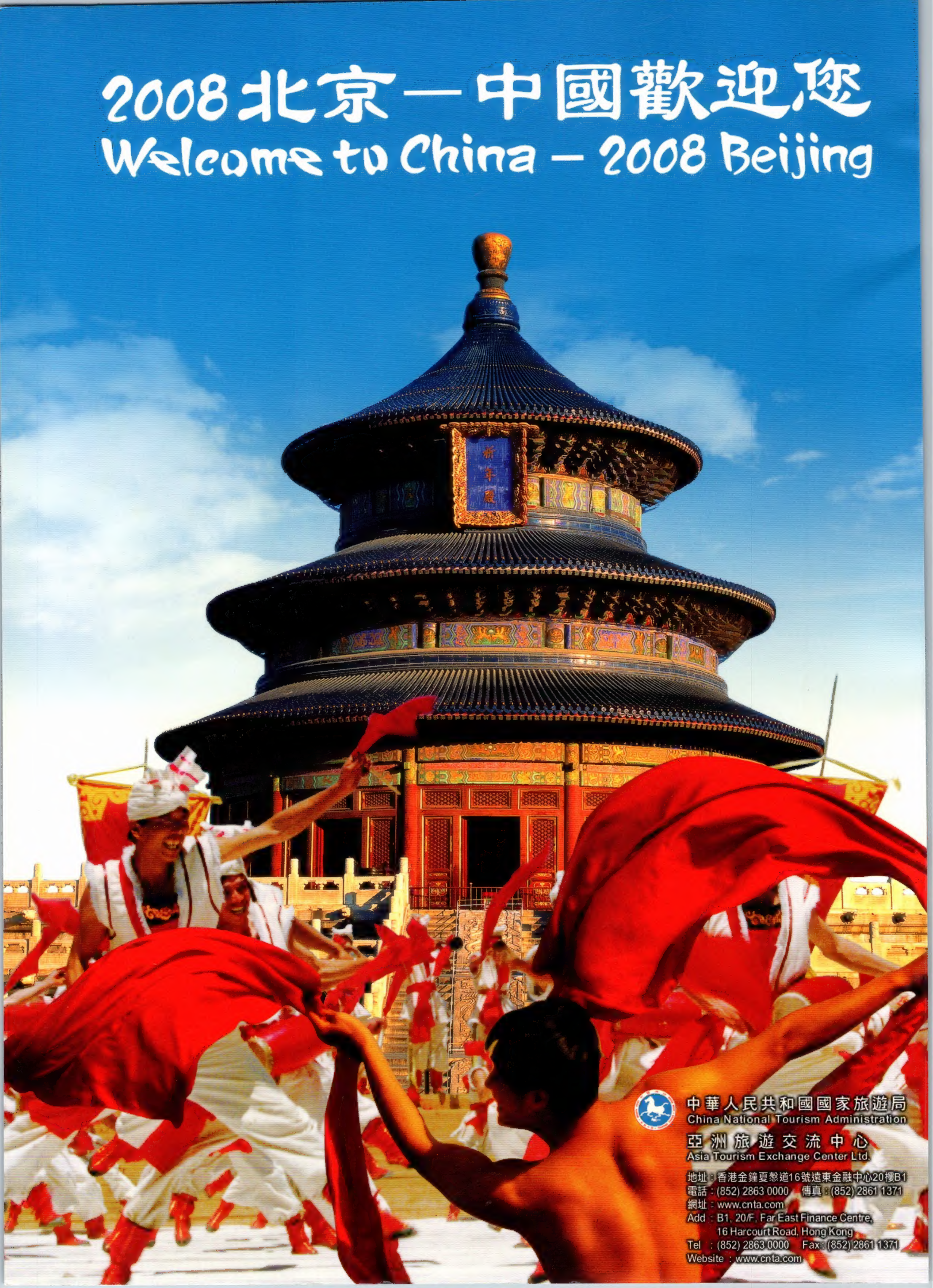

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